GREEK AND
LATIN
ANTHOLOGY

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GREEK AND LATIN ANTHOLOGY

Part III. GREEK EPIGRAMS AND SAPPHO

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

SIR WALTER RALEGH: A Biography

FIVE CENTURIES OF ENGLISH VERSE: Impressions

TRUTHS OR TRUISMS

GREEK AND LATIN ANTHOLOGY *thought* INTO ENGLISH VERSE

By WILLIAM STEBBING, M.A.
HON. FELLOW WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD

PART III

GREEK EPIGRAMS AND SAPPHO

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE

First published in 1923

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TO

MY WIFE

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(*Dates are approximate.*)

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GREEK "EPIGRAMS"

GREEK "EPIGRAMS"

Never have feeling, habits, thought, on high and lowly themes, personal and national, if uttered, been uttered in verse, or, if in verse, with so general and diverse a melody and been collected, preserved, and published in forms so accessible as is exemplified in the Greek "Epigrams." Ranging over some thousand years they constitute an anthology unexampled for information, delight, and interest, ethical and literary. Now that we have long enjoyed the inheritance, it is difficult to imagine how much our world, largely moulded on the force, variety and refinement of the Greek, would have lost had violence, or mere age, dispossessed us. English poetry in particular owes much to it; nor is ashamed to admit the debt.

The word "epigram" has been wrenched by Martial's specimens to mean a short poem with a sting to it. Strictly of course it signifies merely an inscription which usually would be short. Incidentally, to tell as much, and be remembered as long as possible, it was pointed. Advantage of its suggestive brevity was likely to be taken by ill-natured wits to poison the barb. Epigrams in Martial's and the popular modern sense are by no mean unknown, particularly in later periods of the Greek "Anthology," but are the exceptions. The general use, as shown in the sixth century A.D. collection by

Agathias Scholasticus, followed by the Palatine in the tenth, and that by Planudes in the fourteenth, had been to inform passengers along roads or visitors to temples and public monuments. These three works, doubtless, absorbed earlier and smaller stores of sweet occasional poetry, as, in particular, Meleager's "Garland" of his own, and other compendious flowers of Greek fancy.

Among reasons for insertion of beautiful Greek epigrams in my Classical Anthology, has been that it reminded me of my old school. Admittance to "College" at Westminster was confined to "Town Boys," aged twelve to thirteen, who won it by a system of "Challenges." This was a series of learned duels. The lower in each pair "posed" the upper, and, if victorious, took his place. A selection of Greek epigrams, and another from Ovid's "Metamorphoses," were the hunting grounds for questions. I studied—not very diligently—Greek epigrams for that purpose alone. Sense of their beauty is an enthusiasm of a long life's close.

The poetical wealth they store is vast and various. I have exemplified sufficiently in my versions satire and humour, even to broad comedy. Here it is enough to dwell on Hellenic quick and tender sympathy with sorrow, love, scenic beauty, even piety; its mixture of vivid, spontaneous wit and sweet, native simplicity. A sister of seven dies, broken-hearted at the loss of a baby brother, and a mother of dead children, at the deaths of boys she had adopted to replace them. On one page is a triumphal hymn to Heavenly Love, and hard by, in despair of humanity, a call for the wine cup. Nereids chant the dirge of queenly, sacked Corinth; and a forlorn master laments a pet dog. One lover sends a bouquet, and

courageously, a moral besides. Another defies a whole garden's charms to compete with his mistress's. On the eve of marriage a maid gratefully dedicates her toys to Virgin Artemis. In faith yet more naïve a farmer signs a treaty with Pan on the limits of plough and chase. We find Ben Jonson—an old Westminster—in his perfect "Song to Celia"—anticipated by Agathias through an irresistible kiss on the goblet's brim. I doubt if even the treasury of Elizabethan-Jacobean verse can exhibit a second jewel to surpass a second kissing lyric, "Incredible!"

Greek Anthology has wide confines. Illustrious names occur among its authors. Æschylus is there, claiming in death his laurels from beaten Persians rather than from the wonderful appeal of "Prometheus." Other great names are represented, as those of Sappho, Anacreon, Alcæus, Thucydides, Theocritus, Lucian, Plato, if, indeed, as we shall hope, sweet philosopher and sweet epigrammatist be the same. Meleager indeed, and Simonides of Ceos, with their fame, are for ever associated with it, and almost depend on it for immortality. But the wonder is in the loveliness of pieces by writers altogether obscure, if not resting for shelter in a Greek Anthology. Perhaps, more astonishing still, had not English and, yet more, Scottish, poetry its parallels, is the ascription to "Ignotus" of poems which might have ensured fame to any names!

PRELUDE

Anth. Pal., IV. 1.

My Muse, to whom offerest Thou this fruitful Wreath,
Choir of singers, a garden rich in bloom,
So varied, colour, grace, delicacy of breath,
None superfluous, each a fresh perfume?

Meleager, I, strung, and inscribe, Goddess, now,
For Thee, to Diocles, of all that live
Worthiest memory by bards for debts they owe
Patrons who understand the way to give!

Nor let me forget my gratitude to record
To Anyta—lilies, many in hue—
Mocro—lilies still, white; and for harp and word,
Queen, Sappho—all roses, though alas! few;—

Melanippides—narcissus—with his part-song
Swelling into hymns on the festive lyre;
Simonides a vine-shoot climbing young and strong;
Nossis—iris—wax molten in Love's fire;

With whom odorous marjoram—lo! Rhianos;
Erinna—a crocus—in years ill-starred;
And—his choice a spray of laurel leaves—Samios;
Alcæus—hyacinth—warrior bard!

Next will I interweave Mnasalcas' sharp pine
Tresses with Leonidas' full maze
Of ivy, and Pamphilus' restless plane twine
And bind, in accordance with his own lays.

Quick succession of candidates—nor I refuse
Tymnes' twigs from the white poplar grove,
Pancrates' of walnut; and as gladly use
Nicias' green mint; poppies that love

The salt sea-shore, gift of Euenos, and the dark,
Shy violet that Damagetus brought;—
Verse that fell each into its place without remark;
Others for whom partnership required thought.

Divers gifts, tempers; thus, Callimachus, who next
Passed—with myrtle-berry—and was, first seen,
Virgin honey; would turn to bitterness, and vexed
At nought, decry worth in a fit of spleen.

After him Euphorion—scarlet lychnis—came,
With the Nine Muses' spice-plant him who had,
As minstrel, from the Dioscuri his surname—
Charm equal—and Hegesippus, grape-mad.

Music the one bond for garden, wood, heath, and bush,
Wove Diotimus' quinces on their bough;
Nicænetus and his myrrh; Perses, and his rush,
Both fragrant; earliest flowers that blow

On Menecrates' pomegranate, Simmias' pear,
Phaennus' terebinth, parsley off soil
Heaven's rain and sunshine favour with loving care,
Bacchylides' corn spared the thresher's toil.

Some fragmentary, but fruitful; by the Muse steeped
In honey; such spontaneous, unsown,
As from Anacreon piously I have reaped;
Or crookt thorns watered by scorching steam blown

Off a fiery ocean from the mighty brain
Of Archilochus. Nor without the scorn
Savour I less Alexander's olive, or strain—
Red lily—in Polycleite's meadow born.

Welcome also our amaracus, precious bard,
Polystratus', flower of singers young;
Antipater's cypress, and him of the spikenard,
Gift of Hermes to Man for lyric song;

And the twain, Posidippus, Hedylus, if wild
Field nurslings; and Asclepiads' wind—
Blossoms. Content I so long as the great Pair gild
My Wreath with the Eternity of Mind.—

The Golden Bough of Plato, in all ways Divine,
Guide through the Universe for Good and Wise,
Light that by its own virtue cannot cease to shine;
And Aratus, road-maker of the skies,

With palm, Heaven-high, symbol of the pioneer,
Who mapped the stars' orbits, yet would not disdain
Simple, noble—metre, or flowers—for his peer,
Whether from heath, garden, vale, hill, or plain;—

Phanias -corn-flow'rs –Chæremon—lotus' full locks;
Theodorides –thyme, wild, strong, and sweet;
Daisies, Antagoras' growth; Phædimus pink stocks—
And verse new-writ that ages may repeat.

MELEAGER, OF GADARA.

A.D. 60.

Pardon I crave for self-love if I myself dare
Add white violets I had early grown.
At least they please friends. But all sealed the Muses' are
Free of the Garland; its sweets are their own!

Meleager, of Gadara.

SOLDIERLY

I LIKE not your strutters with Captains' air,
Chins smooth as girl's cheek, crowns of curly hair.
Give me, to fight, bowlegs, squat, on firm feet,
Heart pledging the whole never to be beat.

ARCHILOCHUS, OF PAROS.

676 B.C.

GIFTS I WOULD NOT

NOT Gyges' gold for Me. I do not love
Gods' vocation; nor, might I, would reign above.
"And a large Tyranny?" That I despise;
Joy that far is the prospect from my eyes!

ARCHILOCHUS, OF PAROS.

A BRIDE IN DEATH

Anth. Pal., VII. 489.

Here lies the dust of Timas. We sorrowed to lose the Maid,
The happy Comrade with whom we grew up, and spun, and played.
Between sport and earnest, when in wide confidence she told
She was pledged to desert us, how we feigned to taunt and scold!
Alas! if but now we were of the troop that should have led
Her by mimic force with dance and song to a bridegroom's bed!
Greedy Mower! a double swathe at one scythe's stroke to reap;
Rob of Virgin and Wife at once, and leave all twice to weep.
But we yield not Timas. Though a grim Hymenaeus will
Seal Thee among Death's Brides below, Thou art our Playmate still.
Proud grief Ours; for thy sake, dust, as thine, let our love-locks be;
Would the air that wafts it now, could whisper this love to Thee!

Sappho.

611 B.C.

POETESS *v.* ENCHANTRESS

Athenæus Deipno., XIII.

Boasts Naucratis of the shameless vows sworn
By Charaxus, in revels, night to morn,
To its greedy Doricha's venal charms,
Proud captive in insolent triump borne?
Nay; soon to end; for when paused Time to spare
Myrrh-breathing robe, mantle of golden hair?
But a Sister sings.
While barques sail Nile's pools
Sappho's wrath sparkles, and burns, round the love-fouled pair.

Posidippus.

240 B.C.

MARS AS HOUSE DECORATOR

Athenæus, XIV.

Dwelt I in palaces, hear what furniture would become
The mansion where I pleased to fix my home.
Ares is the decorator I'd choose, and bronze his ware.
For use and beauty. He'd provide me there.
See! how the helms flash, and from them white horse-hair crests the God
Thinks crown heads best: how wrathfully they nod!
The walls are hidden every inch to the roof from floor
By pegs bending under an endless store
Of bright bronze greaves, new breastplates cloth-lined, shields, the bow supplied
With quiver of strong arrows at its side;
Nor be forgot—to ease stress of bronze, frocks, doublets laid;
Or, for when other arms fail, the broad blade!

Alcæus, of Mitylene.

611 B.C.

RHYTHM OF LIFE

Soul, stupefied by cares, with "no way out"!
Up! meet plotters in front; Shame, Shame, a rout!
They laid an ambush; you fell in it; On
At them! a battle's not lost till 'tis won.
Both sides owe self-respect. Thus, he who shows
Triumph in the face of his beaten foes,
Merits not success; nor will one that lies
In unmanly debasement live to rise.
Joy in matters for rejoicing; in ill,
Never to excess, sorrow if you will.
Life has its music; let us seek a way
Not to jangle the chords whereon we play.

Archilochus, of Paros.

676 B.C.

WHOM ARES LOVES

Anth. Pal., VII. 160.

"Champion Timocritus! and slain—his grave!"
God Ares spares the cowards, not the brave.

Anacreon, of Teos.

563 B.C.

THERMOPYLÆ (1)

Anth. Pal., VII. 249.

Stranger, tell Lacedæmon here we lie.
As She bade us. Spartans obey, and die.

Simonides, of Ceos.

557 B.C.

THERMOPYLÆ (2)

A dirge for Thermopylæ's dead?
Lot nobler, fairer fate, could They have wished instead?
For mere common men, mourn, weep, raise
Tombs; Heroes' due is memory; not pity, praise.
It is an Altar where we lay
Their bones; a Monument that neither dank decay,
Nor jealous, all-subduing Time
Shall efface, or dim. This precinct, narrow, sublime,
Holds the glory of Greece. To have
Testimony, look, world, to this Shrine of the Brave,
Hallowed by an e'er-flowing spring
Of fame; at the head, Leonidas, Sparta's King!

Simonides, of Ceos.

FALLEN AT PLATÆA

Anth. Pal., VII. 251.

For the dear Fatherland renown! unquenchable the flame!
Alas! the spark that lit it drew around the pall of death!
Yet dying is not death, when, glorified by starry fame,
Virtue leads Heroes back to sunshine, and re-inspires breath!

Simonides, of Ceos.

HOME!

Anth. Pal., VII. 510.

In shroud of foreign sand—by Fate's decree,
This, Cleisthenes, Thou, tossed on Euxine's Sea?
Ah, the vain longing, bitter-sweet, to come
Back, though dead, to Chios, thy island home!

Simonides, of Ceos.

COMPLAINT OF DANAE

Alas! for Danae, in her sepulchral ark
Cunningly wrought as for a great King's daughter—Hark!
As the gale blows, and She feels the gulf's billows rise,
How, terror-stricken, with cheeks tears bedewed, She cries,
Clasping Perseus:

"Thou dost not know,
My Child, thy hapless Mother's woe;
Heart easeful, and in happy rest,
With, for thy Universe, my breast,
Sleepest, ignorant of our doom,
Of the joyless night's blue-black gloom.
In this bronze-studded gaol forlorn,
Heedless to what sire Thou wast born,
Dost not, innocent morsel, mind
Blustering voices of the wind;
Nor carest that Babe's hair may have
Been ruffled by a passing wave,
Lying, pretty face, curled up warm
In purple cloak, fearless of harm.
And well! Else, saw'st things as they are,
I would word them so Thou might'st bear
As kisses, and be rocked to sleep
By the upheaval of the deep;
I racking myself to beguile
Boundless ill to affect a smile.
But, Zeus, a wrong! grant Thou redress!
Though bold I to Thy Mightiness.
Justice I—desperate and wild—
Claim, not for myself, to Thy Child!

Simonides, of Ceos.

MYRON'S HEIFER

Anth. Pal., IX. 736.

Alas! that pause to inspire life! Metal, too fast
For the creative impulse, set; the bronze was cast.

FROM DEATH LIFE

Anth. Pal., VII. 255.

Dark Fate doomed; and these shepherds, sword in hand,
Met Destiny and glory. In death's sleep
Chose for shrouds Ossa dust; won for the land
Of Thessaly freedom to hold, and keep.

Æschylus.

525 B.C.

ON HIMSELF

Pausanias, Attica, XIV. 5.

Within lies Æschylus of Athens, born
Euphorion's son. Gela, rich in corn,
Saw his death; sacred Marathon his deeds.
Their worth? Ask them he fought—the long-haired
Medes!

Æschylus.

A VAIN VIRGIN

Athenæus Deipnosophistæ, XIV.

Chaste Athena, as in playing She saw Her face
In a still pool convulsed by the strain, flung the flute
Wrathfully in, with a threat: "Dare thus to disgrace
My Goddesship's features! Be thou for ever mute!"

Melanippides.

520 B.C.

EURIPIDES

Anth. Pal., VII. 45.

"GRAVE"? in Macedon. There let his bones lie.
But "Monument"? All Greece shall be, and raise;
Yea, his birthplace, Athens, of Greece the Eye!
There, most he joyed the Muses; earned Men's praise!
THUCYDIDES.

471 B.C.

ZEPHYR

Anth. Pal., VI. 53.

EUDEMUS raised this Shrine to Zephyr, breath of Spring;
Trustiest; there are mercies none as it can bring.
He'd reaped; ripe ears idled, when, a shout! as of war;
Prayer answered; the grain lay winnowed on the floor!
BACCHYLIDES.

470 B.C.

PEACE

Stobæus, 53, 369.

Hail, Peace ! that for mortals from thy kind womb
Bringest forth great things, wealth, and song's sweet bloom ;
On the Gods' rich-wrought altars yellow flame,
Steam of bulls' and sheep's flesh, grateful perfume.

Games —Hark !—flutes, frolics ; Youth is in the air.
Meanwhile the red-brown spider plans her lair,
Weaves her web in the shield's iron-bound ring ;
And rust gnaws spear-heads, two-edged swords—War's ware.

Start not, honeyed sleep ! as at trumps' alarm ;
'Twas revellers abroad, meaning no harm ;
Love-lays they were woke darkness into light.
War whispers—hearts chill ; Peace shouts—they grow warm !

Bacchylides.

A DEAD CHILD

Stobæus, CXXI. 610.

"Alas our Child!"
Ills are that loom so fell
Tears but mimic; the ache words cannot tell!
Bacchylides.

AN OLD SCORE

Anth. Pal., IX. 75.

Gnawed, Goat, to the root, I will somehow press out wine enough
For libations at thy sacrifice—a well-earned set-off!
Euenos.

460 B.C.

SUMMER GUESTS

Anth. Pal., IX. 122.

Shame! release it, Attic maid!
Gall—not honey—inspired raid!
Chirper upon chirper feed
Its nestlings—out on foul deed!
Horror! the unholy feast,
Summer guest on summer guest!
Down with it! Spare Heav'n a sight
Murdering all views of right.
Warbler warbler to devour!
Scene to turn sweetest song sour!

Euenos.

A ROYAL BODY GUARD

Anth. Pal., VII. 259.

Eretrians, of Euboa; and at Susa; buried here.
Exiles learn how far home is—and how dear!

Plato, of Athens.

428 B.C.

NO ALTERNATIVE!

Anth. Pal., IX. 45.

A MAN left gold; another took it; left a noose.
So the first hanged himself; having but life to lose.

PLATO, OF ATHENS.

PAN PIPES

Anth. Pal., IX. 823.

SILENCE for Pan! From out the rough cliff gush
Bright runlets; Yet let them abate their rush,
Staying even their sweet murmurs; and, flock,
Clambering here and there from rock to rock,
Still awhile your motley bleat!

Listen, Nature all, as the God's lips skim
The linked reeds, how harmonious for him!
See! his choir, that, awaiting him, had stood,
Dumb as statues, Nymphs of Fountain and Wood,
Break, a show'r of gleaming feet!

PLATO, OF ATHENS.

THE BROOK INVITES

Anth. Planud., 13.

Sit by me; Zephyr touches the pine,
And its chatter, into tune with mine.
As my ripples fall and rise.

A woodman hard by upon his reed,
Shall the chorus, boughs and brooklet, lead,
And charm sleep to willing eyes.

Plato, of Athens.

LAÏS TO APHRODITÉ

Anth. Pal., VI. 1.

"Insolent scoffer through Greece, I, despair
Of young lovers froz'n, out, in the night air,
Give my mirror! I cannot see herein
That I was; and—that I am, could not bear!"

Plato, of Athens.

LIGHT ON EARTH AND BELOW

Anth. Pal., VII. 670.

Hail, Star of Dawn and Life! nor, when we sink in death,
Less Hail, Hesperus, dying to light us Beneath!

PLATO, OF ATHENS.

A TWIN SOUL

Anth. Pal., V. 78.

A kiss; and touch of lips; not strange my Soul should cling,
Strive to cross, weep to turn, and starve with Me, poor thing!

PLATO, OF ATHENS.

TIME

Anth. Pal., IX. 18.

Time carries off all things; would'st thou exchange
Name, looks, nature, luck? Just give time full range.
PLATO, OF ATHENS.

ARISTOPHANES

Olympodorus and Magister, Lives of Plato.

Seeking a "close" that should, facing every quarter, share
All variety, divide the rude shock of any breeze,
Lose no sparkle upon life, no invigorating air,
The Graces chose for Shrine the soul of Aristophanes.
PLATO, OF ATHENS.

CUPID ASLEEP

Anth. Planud., IV. 210.

So, when we came to a deep-shadowed grove,
We found, within, the little God of Love.
Cythera's child, skin like apples red,
Unarmed lay upon rosebuds for a bed
In the bonds of sleep, smiling. Shafts and bow
Hung on trees—as to wound how could they know!
Tawny bees clustered o'er each dainty lip,
Honeyed blossoms that tempted them to sip.

PLATO, OF ATHENS.

SOPHOCLES

Anth. Pal., VII. 22.

GENTLY! Sophocles lies here!—dress his tomb!
Ivy, for sun-proof; creep and intertwine;
Everywhere, for scent, let roses bloom;
And spread thou thy lithe tendrils, fruitful vine!

Nature will see that life and rest accord.
Speech flowed, perfect harmony, from his tongue,
And his wisdom dropped honey at each word.
Muses inspired, the Graces "formed," his song.

SIMMIAS, OF THEBES.

400 B.C.

MODESTY

Anth. Græc., Append. III. 22.

Believe, or not! I say, the farthest bound
"In pictorial art that mortal can
Reach, this hand now of mine has surely found—
Yet not faultlessness; that is not for Man."
Parrhasius, of Ephesus.

400 B.C.

UNDECIDED

Anth. Pal., VII. 720–1.

Was Thyre Spartan, or Argive? Each side
Fought by champions, equal in number, spears,
But a pair of the Argives had not died;
Their foes seemed dead, though one swooned, as appears.

The pair, leaving vultures to their death-feast,
Went in triumph off, when the Spartan woke;
His spear signed—death-blood—which the land possess'd;
And battle sealed the seisin Cleuas took.
Chæremon, of Athens.

380 B.C.

NOT HIS FAULT

Anth. Pal., XI. 236.

All Cilicians are bad; Kinyras alone is good.
But he is Cilician; so, would be bad if he could.

Demodocos, of Leros.

370 B.C.

A PENSIONER

Anth. Pal., VI. 228.

Farm ox, unequal to the plough—what then?
The shambles for supper of harvest men?
"Honest toil I rate higher!" Alkon cries.
And the good beast, lowing a mild surprise,
Accepts the lush grass, and leisure, the lot
He'd earned, as he would the axe he had not.

Addæus, of Macedon.

320 B.C.

"CŒLUM, ANIMAM, MUTANT"

Anth. Planud., IV. 170.

Strangers would of Cnidian Venus say:
"To Her how Mortals and Immortals down!"
And before armed Pallas another day,
At Athens, cry: "Paris was but a clown!"

Hermodorus.

320 B.C.

HIS SHARE

Stobæus, Flor., p. 124.

I miss my best friend! But pity? Life's share
Fate mixed—with, part, ill; and much too of fair!

Philetas.

300 B.C.

THE ONLY SWEET

Anth. Pal., V. 170.

Sweeter than Love nought; nay, as sweet. A kiss,
Love-Queen's, robs honey of taste.—Nossis knows—
None can tell but they who have had that bliss
Why each flow'r She breathes on becomes a rose!

Nossis.

300 B.C.

HERMES OF THE CROSSWAYS

Anth. Pal., IX. 314.

By the gusty orchard, near to the grey sea-shore,
Crossways Hermes bids: "Rest secure,
All you wayfaring strangers, thirsty and footsore;
And drink; our fount is cold and pure!"

Anyta.

300 B.C.

DESIRABLE TILL DUE

Anth. Pal., IX. 54.

"To have lived till old you praised; now curse the 'boon' come to you!
Yes; a debt life owes man, that 'he' profits by leaving due."

MENECRATES, OF EPHESUS.

300 B.C.

PENALTY IN KIND

Anth. Pal., IX. 55.

IF a man of many years prays Zeus still for more,
Answer, Zeus, his vow by granting another score.

MENECRATES (OR LUCILIUS).

JUDGED ALREADY

Anth. Pal., VII. 545.

From a pyre's left to the right, it is said,
Hermes guides the good who obey death's call.
Thus Aristonous, be sure, He led,
Mid hot tears to the Royal Judgment Hall.

Hegesippus.

300 B.C.

A VOTIVE CLUSTER

Anth. Pal., VI. 119.

In the gold porch of Aphrodité's Shrine.
Brimming with nectar Bacchus loves to give,
Thou hangest, Cluster, glory of thy Vine.
What perfectness could'st thou add, didst thou live?

But alas for her that bore! Vain now art
Coaxing around thee tendrils to reach up,
And screen from scorching sun. A vine's warm heart
Misses throb of juices from thy full cup.

Moero, of Byzantium.

300 B.C.

PETRIFIED, YET ARTICULATE

Anth. Pal., VII. 730.

"Mnasilla!" this relief carved in the grave,
Shows the sorrow for Her in girlhood's charm,
Who, childbirth's prey, rests—death-mist, full tide wave,
Settling o'er the eyelids—on the loved arm.

Near, yet not to trespass on deeper woe,
The father with right hand strokes his wife's head.

Poor mortals we who crave to have it so—
Our grief to be deathless when we are dead.

Perses, of Thebes, or Macedon.
DATE UNKNOWN.

CHILDREN AT A SHRINE

Anth. Pal., VI. 357.

"Bless you, Precious! but, for I know you not by face,
Please, tell me, Dears, your names and race?"
"I, 'Nikanor,' Lady; Æpioretos' son,
And Hegeso's; from Macedon.
Nikanor's sister I; Parents. I, He, the same;
But I'm 'Phila'; I've my own name.
Perhaps, you may wonder why we to-day have come—
Our parents' wish; ere we go home!"

THEÆTETUS.

300 B.C.

A SON'S MESSAGE

Anth. Pal., VII. 499.

"MATES, Cyrene-bound, I, within this tomb,
Ariston, in the name of Zeus implore
To tell my Father, Menon, of my doom,
Flung, Ægean-drowned, on Caria's shore."

THEÆTETUS.

RESURRECTION OF SPIRIT

Diogenes Lærtius. Life of Crantor.

To delight Men—and Muses, more—Crantor sang and thought.
Age, a first touch, lulled body asleep in earth's arms;
But earth holds not the Holy, like him, dead and nought!
Ah! if he lives "There" with all a glad Spirit's charms!

THEÆTETUS.

SUBMISSION

Anth. Pal., VII. 284.

"KEEP your distance, rude Sea! Not near enough?
Eight cubits! Swell, roar; and be off!
Well; if Eumares must submit, he must.
But nought worth's here; just, bones and dust."

ASCLEPIADES, OF SAMOS.

290 B.C.

WASTE

Anth. Pal., XII. 46.

"Not two and twenty years old; and life-sick!
But why spoil your plaything, Loves, in this haste?
To frizzle poor Me like a candle-wick!
With brainless dice, sole sport left you—The waste!"

Asclepiades, of Samos.

WAKING PAN

Anth. Pal., IX. 423.

Take bass and treble flutes; pray the Muses to inspire
Thy sweet singing; and I will strike the lyre;
While Daphnis, joining from the dale where his herd feed,
Shall add the magic of his wax-bound reed.
Then we near within the thickety entrance to the deep
Cavern, will startle with music the goat-legged God from sleep.

Theocritus, of Syracuse.

283 B.C.

THE HEAVENLY APHRODITÉ

Anth. Pal., VI. 340.

Render we Aphrodité honour due,
To no common quean of the Town we sue.
Ours is of Heaven; and there She enthroned
Consecrates our Brides. She alone is true.

From that stock is Chrysogoné, chaste Wife
Of Amphiklies, sharing one blest life,
Twain, and Children, to both an equal care;
Not without griefs, we share; in all but strife.

Bliss of no mean bounds, though within a home;
Larger for having from Thee, Goddess, come.
Happiest who take thought for Heaven first;
For they can reckon on most gifts therefrom!

Theocritus, of Syracuse.

BABY'S PLAY

Anth. Pal., VII. 200, *Epitumbia.*

No more, rocking on a bough's leafy spray,
Shall I spin from my whirring, taper wings
The rise, fall, endless chatter of a lay
Born of a summer heat's self-communings;

For while I played my part well as I could,
A child's small hand stole near; squeezed out my breath;
And I, noon coursing music in my blood,
Expired, dreaming of nothing less than death.

NICIAS, OF MITYLENE.

283 B.C.

CHILD GILLOS

Anth. Pal., IX. 315.

Sit beneath the poplars! You are tired; drink; and rest.
Simos found the spring, led it here under the shade;
But 'tis his child's gift. When far, remember him, Guest;
Child Gillos thought of you, and, dead, near by is laid.

Nicias, of Mitylene.

ADVICE TO WAYFARERS

Anth. Pal., Append., Planud., 226.

Leave, Wayfarer, to sheep the overflow,
Warm, miry, from its ravine.
Go
A few steps up the steep where graze young kine;
And you will see by a stone pine,
Bubbling from a rock, its birth place, a fount
Cooler than snow on Thracian mount.

Leonidas, of Tarentum.

274 B.C.

HUMAN MISERY

Anth. Pal., VII. 472.

Endless must have been the aforetime, when, Man, thou wert not;
Endless as well the future, when thou shalt thyself not be.
Between, a pin prick, a hoof's shadow, ere it stamp the spot
Covered by humankind with annals of mortality.

So brief is life, so hateful and down-trodden that cramped space!
Weigh bitternesses against the sweets—might at least not Fate
Have so far evened light and darkness for our short-lived race,
That its sole hope should not be in Death to annihilate!

Leonidas, of Tarentum.

WHOM TO TRUST

Anth. Pal., IX. 107.

"A COCK-BOAT they may call me; nor do I pretend,
Like ocean packets, to steer straight from end to end.
I shun all risks I can; have no wish to surprise
By sheer foolhardiness; for just regard my size.
Yet all must allow for some chance work on the sea;
No tonnage is equal to what waves' rage may be.
Trust in rudders, what not—the issue is not thine,
My faith I prefer to place in Powers Divine!"

LEONIDAS, OF TARENTUM.

MOTHER AND SON

Anth. Pal., VII. 466.

HAPLESS Anticles! but I more! who lay
On the funeral pyre my only Son,
Dead at eighteen, the flow'r of youth, life's May;
Leaving me with stay for my old age none!

Dawn is bright no more; sunshine does not warm.
At least, my Darling, torn hence as thou art,
Let thy lot heal mine; see me safe from harm
In Spirit-land with thee; we cannot part!

LEONIDAS, OF TARENTUM.

AT SEVEN

Anth. Pal., VII. 662.

Left us! and but seven years old,
When other lambs stay in the fold.
Cruel-kind Nature thus to mould
  The fond mother in girl-heart,
That babe-Brother clasped too fast round;
And sore-sorrowing sister found
Death easier than aching wound;
  Would follow, but could not part.
Parents, your Dove, sweet Seven-year,
How Destiny of the most near
Makes, and of the best, and most dear,
  Stings to work a sharpest smart!

Leonidas, of Tarentum.

A DIALOGUE

Anth. Pal., VII. 163.

"Who, Lady, art thou, lying in this tomb?"
Prexo.
"Whose child?"
Calliteles.
"Thy home?"
Samos.
"Who laid thee here?"
Theocritus.
"And of what died'st thou?"
Childbirth was my doom.

"Thy age?"
I died twenty and two years old.
"Leaving thy husband a hearth bare and cold?"
Nay, a three year Calliteles.
"May he
Live long!"
And thou, Friend, with good manifold!
LEONIDAS, OF TARENTUM.

SHEPHERD'S REQUEST

Codex Vatic. 311.

"Shepherds, you who have been used to keep
Ranging this pasturage your goats and sheep,
Kleitagoras prays you remember him
Where he lies 'neath this stone upon the steep.

"I beg a small but tender grace! to prove
Before Earth and Persephone, your love;
Let flocks bleat, and feed, and a shepherd's pipe
The kind life stir, as when I breathed above;

"Country-men, please, pluck ye earliest bloom
On the fresh Spring meadows to wreathe my tomb;
And may ewe's milk plash, sprinkling its rough foot,
Whence a wonted savour to me shall come.

"If the old man troubles, now he is laid
In his grave, has it not been truly said
That they who hear and grant dead men's requests,
Will in exchange be faithfully repaid?"

Leonidas, of Tarentum.

CLASPED HANDS

Anth. Pal., VII. 735.

Phocæan Theano by the faint light
Of sick fancy saw Apellichos; traced,
Sinking within the waves of barren night,
Far spaces parting them of wild sea waste.

"Woe's me, Husband!" she cried: "I see thee steer
For home, but how gladly would I resign
This instant life to Fate that hovers near,
Could I dying feel my hand clasped in thine!"

Damagetus.

290 B.C.

A CENOTAPH

Anth. Pal., VII. 651.

We, Mound and Slab, are not, as you presume
From the dark-blue lettering them to be,
In thirsty Dryopis, acting a tomb
To bones tossed on the Icarian Sea.

Polumedes had no power to wrest
A drowned friend from the stormy waves that break
Off Doliché, Drakanon, though a "guest";
But exerts all efforts a "host" can make

To smooth the passage to the World Beneath.
Cast, Wayfarer, dust in as kind pretence.
Gods in Hades may pity, nor charge death
With fault free from wilfulness of offence.

Euphorion.

274 B.C.

THANKS TO THE MUSES

Anth. Pal., VII. 709.

Ancient Sardis was my sires' home; had I
Been reared there, day-toil had been my ill star,
Or Cybele's praise in gold robes to cry,
And beat the kettle-drum before Her car.
Now, Muses be thanked! Spartan Aleman is my name;
King Gyges was great; but not high as I in fame!

Alexander, of Ætolia.

272 B.C.

TRANSFORMATION

Anth. Pal., XI. 437.

Blocks, young Gargarenes! and poor Diotimus set
To carve souls from them, his sole tool an Alphabet!

Aratus, of Soli.

270 B.C.

AN ORPHANED MOTHER

Anth. Pal., VII. 261.

Why pain in travail, and have borne, and bred,
If 'twere fate I should see my boy lie dead.
Had one to build the other's tomb, was not
It fitting Bianor should draw the lot?

DIOTIMUS, OF ATHENS, OR ADRAMYTRIUM.

LIGHTNING STRUCK

Anth. Pal., VII. 173.

Eve;—stallwards deep in snow the herd. Ne'er woke
Theramenes; he slept long, having been
Struck by Zeus's lightning, under the oak
On the heights, as, wondering, they had seen.

DIOTIMUS, OF ATHENS, OR ADRAMYTRIUM.

A CHILD-MOTHER

Anth. Pal., VII. 197.

WRITE me down "Poluxeina." Wife I came
To Archelaos; for Parents I had
Theodektos and Demareta, blame
Not me your Daughter for a fate so sad!

As far as travail a mother, I bore
A child; he breathed just twenty days, and died.
Eighteen years was my own term, and no more.
Then I passed, scarce a mother, still a bride.

DIOSCORIDES, OF EGYPT (OR IGNOTUS).
220 B.C.

AN EMPTY WINE-JAR

Anth. Pal., VI. 77.

GRACIOUS Bacchus! Accept this empty jar! You will know best,
What in pious worship of Thee became of all the rest.

ERATOSTHENES (WITH RHIANUS.)
Temp. JUSTINIAN I.

FOR FREEDOM

Anth. Pal., VII. 242.

"Their country who sleep here dragged a slave's yoke.
At the price of glorious death 'twas broke.
Sons, dare death at such need; leave yours the pride
That your tombs shall tell why their fathers died!"

Mnasalcas, of Sicyon.

324 or 244 B.C.

THE PET PARTRIDGE

Anth. Pal., VII. 204.

No more, Partridge, that hadst begun to wean
Thyself from thy cliffs, shall I watch thee preen
The tips of thy wings in their wicker home,
Glowing with clear-eyed Dawn's resplendent sheen.

How guess cross Fate, or that cat's greed and spite!
Cropt innocent head at a single bite!
May this thy grave guard thee from outrage worse,
And against scent and claws lie stiff, not "light."

Agathias, of Myrina, Æolia.

A.D. 536.

TROY

Anth. Pal., IX. 155.

"Of Sparta, Stranger? In Troy; and you scorn
My ruins! what of hers where you were born?
Pardon; from Asia? Then, you joy to know,
Fortune avenges, though I lie forlorn.

"Remember, Rome, my slain; Shrines, Walls, laid waste;
How long I bowed my head in ashes! Haste,
Fearless child, re-crown me Queen, as of yore;
Measure out my shame; in turn let Greece taste!"

AGATHIAS, OF MYRINA, ÆOLIA.

THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

Anth. Pal., IX. 147.

BE grateful Ye of the New Birth—who would
Worship in Demeter's Temple, but stood
Dreading Cephisus—to Xenocles' bridge
That disarms the threats of a wintry flood.

ANTAGORAS, OF RHODES.

270 B.C.

BURYING A NAME

Anth. Pal., VII. 537.

Father, not Son, it was who made this grave,
Weeping much, though no body lies beneath.
Lysis buries a name. The Parents have
Nothing else of Mantitheus in death.

Phanias, a Grammarian.

270 B.C.

CANDID

Athenæus, XI.

A teetotal banquet! No wit original and fine
Hope from me. Hedylus must be soaked, sunk,
Good Chian. If you would have him sing, laugh,
Give him wine;
He loathes your dry-as dust, to "live" be drunk.

Hedylus, of Samos, or Athens.

260 B.C.

SAMIAN KRETHIS

Anth. Pal., VII. 459.

Long have the daughters of Samos been wont to mourn:
"Why do you not, Krethis, worshipped sister, return?
In games, story-telling, first; in work and in sport;
Ready tongue, but that never did mischief or hurt.
We have hungered and thirsted for Krethis, the while
The murmur went round she had 'forgotten our Isle';—
Yes; if they 'forget' who never answer can make;
For our Sweet sleeps the sleep from which none can awake!"

Callimachus, of Alexandria.

280–240 B.C.

AT REST

Anth. Pal., VII. 451.

At rest here Saon, Dicon's son, of Acanthos, lies.
It is sleep from Heaven; say not that a good man dies.

Callimachus, of Alexandria.

WISDOM

Anth. Pal., IX. 565.

Clean was the road our Theætetus trod.
Not garlands thence that heralds twine, of God
Bacchus; for light wits, crowns worth their hour's fame.
Deathless, Wisdom, his, Greece shall aye acclaim!

Callimachus, of Alexandria.

'How oft unweary'd have we spent the nights!'
Cowley.

Anth. Pal., VII. 80.

One told me, Herakleitos, of thy fate;
And drew my tears. I bethought me how late
Oft-times we'd sit, seeing the sun to rest,
In not unfruitful, and how sweet debate!

And at Halikarnassos long since Thou
May'st be dust. Yet, "Thou," I will not allow,
All diedst! nightingale-music aye lives;
No arrow for that fits Death's robber bow!

Callimachus, of Alexandria.

ON HIMSELF

Anth. Pal., XII. 43.

Set me not verse to read, or theme to treat,
Where Troy or Argo occupies the stage.
I pace no highway worn by many feet,
Court no myriads to applaud my page.

My thirst I slake from wells that bear my seal;
Forbid retailers of gossip the door;
And half a score of words my soul reveal:
"Whatever is popular I abhor!"

—Callimachus, of Alexandria.

A STUDENT OF "PHAEDO"

Anth. Pal., VII. 471.

Cried: "Sun, Farewell!" and from his town's high wall
Ambracian Cleombrotus leaped down
To Hades. No ill to cheat by the fall;
Just read how a freed Soul lives on its own!

Callimachus, of Alexandria (and Milton).

PREVISION

Anth. Pal., VII. 277.

Leontichos saw in the sun, dipping, emerging, o'er
The tide, a "Guest," though unknown; haled on land; laboured to pour
Sand for a tomb; ev'n wept the drowned, forecasting his own fate,
Sea-diver, to drift at last ashore, nameless, desolate!

Callimachus, of Alexandria.

AN UNQUIET GRAVE

Anth. Pal., VII. 278.

Bless you, unknown friends that bury strays! but ah! within reach
Of the hateful roar and brine of the sleepless, sea-racked beach!
Could but Theris forget the sea-thud; hear tall trees beside,
Birds' song to close his ears to the agony when men died!

Licinius Archias, of Antioch.

120 B.C.

A GRATEFUL MASTER

Anth. Pal., VII. 197.

Democritus in gratitude, to pay
For rest through my shrill notes as long he lay
Sleepless, raised this fit monument beside
The Oropos road when his Minstrel died.

Phaennus.

270 B.C.

ACQUIESCENCE

Anth. Pal., VII. 368.

"Born citizen of Athens, my first home,
I, war's spoil, became citizen of Rome;
And now sea-embraced Cyzicos bestows
Upon me dead the freedom of a tomb.

I keep all—her, that fed me at her breast;
My captress—war's lot—Empress, East and West;
Nor least, her of the Three, who clasps me still,
And promises to me eternal rest!"

Erycius, of Cyzicus.

50 B.C.

A MUTUAL INSTINCT

Anth. Pal., IX. 114.

Bending o'er a roof-edge—babes fear not death—
A child laughed back.
Mother, halt! hold your breath!
Mute; and how eloquent! She bared her breast;
And life thence again a saved infant blest.

Parmenion, of Macedon.

50 B.C.

NEREIDS' DIRGE

Anth. Pal., IX. 151.

Lost Corinth! Where than Corinth had mankind
City fairer? Gone coronet of tow'rs,
Our boast, for whence the glory if not ours?
Gone, temples of the Great Gods there enshrined!
Halls wherein a royal race once had reigned!
Mute the clang when armed She reviewed her pow'rs!
No warning by the Fury that devours,
Ere the blast that left not a rack behind!
Yet not Nature's, Corinth, thy overthrow;
But Man's rage at Man. In one large hand War
Engulfed Art's, Trade's secular triumphs; lo!
Poured down one gluttonous throat the whole store,
Leaving Sea Nymphs alone to hymn thy woe,
Tell what thou wert -the naught thou art, deplore!

Antipater, of Sidon.

100 B.C.

THE CRANES OF IBYCUS

Anth. Pal., VII. 745.

Alas for thee, Ibycus! on thy way
From Samos' Isle, richly endowed, they say,
By its lord, to Corinth, where thou wert bid
To sing in the theatre some lovely lay,

Landed on a lone shore, robbers in wait
Slew. He called, witnesses to his sad fate,
A cloud of screaming cranes that hovered o'er;
Nor in vain;—swift vengeance! Early or late,

Blood-guiltiness—lucre—coveting train,
Yours, ye murderers, who take life for gain,
Unawed by God's wrath—will not cheat the eye
Of the Furies tracking sin to its bane.

Antipater, of Sidon.
(and Schiller).

100 B.C.

PINDAR

Append., Planud., X.

No idle myth lyre's Lord, that on thy lips—
A Babe's—omen of sweetness they should breathe—
Bees, a swarm, settling as if honey sips
From blossoms destined a Bard's crown to wreathe;

Or that horned Pan, God of Mænalus, having played,
And chanced to hear one of thy hymns Divine,
As a trumpet silences a flute, laid
Reeds aside, to sound none but strains of Thine!

ANTIPATER, OF SIDON.

A GRAVE ON IO'S SHORE

Anth. Pal., VII. 5.

MERE surf! And it may hide within its sands the dust of Him
Whose spirit is the Muses'. But his voice is flame; along
His track come Heroes, Gods, Seers, Greece, thy Sun no more is dim;
Hark! the whole Earth charmed against age by an immortal Song!

ANTIPATER, OF SIDON.

"GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS!"

Anth. Pal., IX. 58.

Tombs, Egypt, Caria; Colossi; far East,
Babylon's walls where war-cars drive abreast.
With the lordly city, and at their feet
Hanging gardens fair as e'er Nature dressed.

Visited? Yes; yet fancy will scarce draw
Their features; but 'twas, as now there, I saw
Soaring to the clouds, Artemis's Shrine,
Eclipsing rivals by a Divine awe!

Antipater, of Sidon.

A SIMPLE TALE

Anth. Pal., VII. 454.

There are woes that stir pity in the dead,
Who have their own cause for grief; such is thine,
Aretemias. At thy turn to tread
The further bank of Cokytus, a line

Of Doric girls marked thee torn in its bloom
From life, a stillborn babe on thy bent arm,
And inquired, in pity, his and thy doom,
Tears furrowing thy cheeks, many and warm,

This thy reply: "I bore two at a birth,
My friends; I left behind one of the two
With my husband Above upon the Earth;
And one I have brought, as you see, Below."

Antipater, of Sidon.

BY A THRESHING-FLOOR

Anth. Pal., VII. 209

Dead, and on the threshold of treasures without bound.
Yet let this clod make—foretaste—a funeral mound—
Painful, busy Ant—built up of Demeter's earth,
That thou might'st be soothed with visions of ripe corn's birth!

Antipater, of Sidon.

ELEMENTAL SHUFFLING

Anth. Pal., VII. 639.

Seas are many; but Sea all; and all in misdeeds are one.
Why scold Cyclades, Narrows, Needles, for harm each has done?
I here, Aristagoras, slipped through any with a name,
And went under in Port Skarphé; so, how apportion blame?
The Sea's way is the Sea's; if it means to catch you it will.
Pray "safe return." Then, drown in port; and, Sea, deny the ill!

Antipater, of Sidon.

TIMON OF ATHENS

Anth. Pal., VII. 315.

"Let, loose, Sand, the rough thorns and brambles twist
Their tangled shoots over here, as they list,
Everywhere, so that no bird in spring
Plant its light foot above, and dare to sing.
My townsmen love me not; I loathe mankind,
Yet stay, as neither dead nor alive, behind.
No more! I, Timon, have announced my will;
Lo! a hermit corpse, stretched straight, cold, and still."

Rhianus (or Zenodotus) and Shakespeare.

200 B.C.

PAN'S MINSTRELSY

Anth. Pal., Append.; Planud. 226.

Spread, Pan, joy and music as o'er the hills you lead
Your choir, breathing on the reed
Rustic tunes from sweet lips, and in response there floats
A burst of well-ordered notes;
While, about, in rhythmic accord you inspire, beat
Naiads' rustling, twinkling feet.

Alcæus, of Messene.

200 B.C.

ARE—WILL BE

Anth. Pal., VI. 116.

See! a wild bull's tanned hide, brow, horns—gifts these,
Battle spoils from Orbelus; may it please
A God accept, Minyan Hercules,
From Philip who quelled the brute's pride!

Not beasts alone fall to Alcmena's son;
More martial palms shall be by Philip won.
Far the course Emathia's king must run;
Envy, avaunt—be thou defied!

Samius (or Samus), of Macedon.

210 B.C.

HERMES

Append., Planud., XI.

"Nicagoras owns orchard and chattels; at his request
I, God Hermes, rejoice to guard them—how much more a Guest!
Sit by my side; for I can see that you are tired; and rest
In shade of the plane tree, fanned by the soft breath of the West."

Hermocreon.

90 B.C.

TO ARTEMIS

Anth. Pal., VI. 271.

Son I of Kichesius dedicate
These sandals, and Themistodiké, I
This folded mantle—our thanks, Good and Great,
That, bow laid aside, Thy hands from on high
Blessed the childbed. And, Artemis, still grace bestow,
That Leon may see his baby to boyhood grow!

Phædimus, of Macedon.

100 B.C.

THE GREAT MYSTERIES

Anth. Pal., XI. 42.

Though home-tied, bethink thee thou'rt two, one whole;
That, though half, the Body, may be content
To squat, dig, and eat, on its patch, the soul
Is a serf thereon, cooped up thus, and pent.

Give Demeter thy Self—Her due! Away
To Athens—find there, on the Great Nights, light.
Walk Earth henceforth—care gone—in a broad day,
And obey All Souls' call, free and upright.

Crinagoras, of Mitylene.

31 B.C., A.D. 14.

WINTER ROSES

Anth. Pal., VI. 345.

"Spring is blossoms' time; roses we of Spring;
But, Maiden we wait on thee, and 'tis said
This thy birthday is; also whispering
That the same ev'ning is to see thee wed.

"Let frost nip, we mock it, gladly abide
Its worst, forgo May's sun to wreathe the brows
With our crimson buds of the fairest Bride
Ever granted to a true lover's vows."

Crinagoras, of Mitylene.

HOPE'S DELUSIONS

Anth. Pal., IX. 8.

Live thy life! let not Hope's frauds, thefts, fool thee, bidding thee wait
Till a last dawn disposes of work, joys, put off too late.

Julius Polyænus, of Sardis.

120 B.C.

AT LIBERTY

Anth. Pal., VII. 189.

No more at the first challenge of the sun
Will the quick patter of thy beat ring clear;
Sad voices ask what else could have been done
In Alkis's rich home to keep thee here.

Thou mightest answer:
"Children, I too grieve
To part from you; but gold, even life, love,
Make not up for free air. For that I leave
The kindest prison in your realm Above.

I feel my limbs, if shadows, my own still;
In the King's fields Below I leap and skip;
Golden Proserpine's gardens range at will,
And as I please shadowy dew I sip."

Aristodicus, of Rhodes.

90 B.C.

A DEAD BIRD

Anth. Pal., VII. 199.

Bird, that the Graces vied to dress
With all their charms, how vain to strive
Recall the whole! one I'd caress;
It seems a hundred once did live.

Like brooding halcyon's thy breath
In song! the sweet arts thy delight,
Ravished, Reed-warbler, all by Death;
Lost in the silent ways of night!

Tymnes.

90 B.C.

ONE TERMINUS

Anth. Pal., VII. 477.

You disliked, Philænis, dying from home; the way Below
By the Nile was that your family know.
Alas! dead, and at Eleutherné! but—Hades the bourn—
All paths we take, you've found, will serve our turn.

Tymnes.

AN OPTIMIST

Anth. Pal., IX. 446.

All ways have their sunny side. Cities are
Sociable; bide at home would'st Thou hide care;
  Country for pleasure; Voyaging for gain;
For knowledge, learn how foreign races fare.

Marriage doubles interests—two are one;
Bachelors need think of themselves alone;
  Children are a father's bulwark, hearth's fort;
Childlessness, and anxieties begone!

Youth's part is manly spirit; to attend
Age, comes wise authority. Of the blend,
  Sooner or later, good balancing ill,
A stock that lives, not dwindles to its end.

Julianus Ægyptius.

Temp. Julianus I.

A LEARNED GARRET

Anth. Pal., VI. 303.

"If you climbed my garret expecting food,
Mice, I pity; you toiled up for no good.
Lower down, you'll find dried figs and cream cheese,
You might spread a feast with the rinds of these.
But be warned each! off books!—Again, a tooth
On them—he'll laugh the wrong side of his mouth!

ARISTON.

90 B.C.

FREED

Anth. Pal., VII. 178.

"LYDIAN? Yes; to Timanthes foster father, and slave;
But freed by him, and laid in a free grave.
When, Master, in hale old age, closing a life without ill,
You come down, command your slave's service still!"

DIOSCORIDES, OF EGYPT.

220 B.C.

NAUGHT!

Anth. Pal., X. 124.

Man's life is mock and dust; and all things are no thing—
Like their source; for all from stuff without meaning spring.
What gain that, from this naught, aught may rise than naught worse?
Thus marriage, for once good, how many times a curse!
Joy in children? Die—you grieve; live—what cares!—
And those
Are but some samples of this Nothingness's woes!

Glycon (or Glaucon).

AT SIXTEEN

Anth. Pal., VII. 600.

Who could think, Anastasia, when Thou
Wert among us in all thy maiden bloom,
That the Graces, emulous to bestow
Bridal charms, dressed you for an unripe tomb?

Well must a father, bridegroom, mingle tears;
Even the old ghosts' Ferryman might weep.
The pretty child-wife of just sixteen years!
Less than one sun's entire course, and death's sleep!

Julianus Ægyptius.

A POET'S FOUNTAIN.

Anth. Pal., IX. 327.

Hermocreon chanced on this spring. For your fair feet to tread,
Naiads, paved and roofed it. Of grace to him,
Replenish it from its hidden sources, and kindly lead
Fresh to fill your pure fountain to the brim.

Hermocreon.

90 B.C.

TO RHODOKLEIA

Anth. Pal., V. 74.

Lily, and anemone wet
With the morning dew; a rose-bud,
One blush; lithe jonquil, violet,
Gleaming deep purple from the wood—

Spring's offering—how they, beneath
My fingers, from a pile of bloom
Gradually become the wreath
I send, loveliness and perfume.

With moral: "All things mortal are";
And o'er this on to-morrow's hearth,
Muse: "Even maids divinely fair
Must, like flowers, resolve to earth!"

Rufinus, of Byzantium.

PLATO

Anth. Pal., VII. 571.

While Plato, last of Orpheus' line, still lived,
A succession, old melodies, survived.
But he is gone; and where find one again,
Poet-lyrist, like him? We search in vain!

Leontius, Scholasticus, of Byzantium.
Temp. Justinian I.

SPRING

Anth. Pal., X. 16.

Nature's yearly re-birth is now; each glad, green field
Vies in the riches it will yield.
How fresh the leafage! how the roses weave bowers
Of thin many-hued, sweet flowers!

Cicalas music-mad, from cypresses drilled, trim,
Shrill their interminable hymn,
Contending to refresh the binder of the sheaves,
While swallow-broods swarm in the eaves.

Earth stirs, sea sleeps. Zephyr promises that no gale
Shall rend an unsuspecting sail,
Or sweep unwarned a high-curved prow within the reach
Of breakers on a surf-vexed beach.

Yet—for winds and waves are false and self-willed—'tis well
That Sea-and-harbour Lord shall smell
Sacrificial fish; then kind airs, blow and a brave soul
Scours our Sea to its furthest goal!

Theætetus, Scholasticus, of Constantinople. *Temp.* Justinian I.

A HOME CIRCLE

Anth. Pal., VI. 43

From clay I like to drink; clay-born and bred
To clay return when laid among the dead.

Zonas (Diodorus, of Sardis).

KIND NATURE

Anth. Pal., IX. 667.

Kind Nature! how thy and Man's bounties move
Me to gaiety, gratitude, and love,
As I gather neighbourly welcome, gifts,
From sea, and streamlet, garden, vineyard, grove.

Fisherman, ploughman, render, each, glad toll
To wants of me and mine, to cheer, console.
Ferryman's hail, nightingale, morning's choir,
Harmonized, touch, soothe all into one whole!

Arabius, Scholasticus, of Constantinople.
Temp. Justinian I.

WOE FOR CORINTH

Anth. Pal., VII. 297.

Woe! for the mighty Acrocorinth, Star
Of Hellas, and the twin walls of the Strait.
Its People? See, piled by the Lord of War,
Mummius—indiscriminating Fate—
Bone-mound; Æneads' turn for Priam left
By Greek victors, unburied and unwept.

Polystratus (?) of Egypt.

146 B.C.

AVERAGE

Anth. Pal., VII. 282.

Shipwrecked I; but be none scared by my ill-starred lot;
Other ships sailed the sea with mine, and suffered not.

Theodorides, of Syracuse.

235 B.C.

NEIGHBOURLY DEATH

Anth. Pal., VII. 78.

In Philosophy, on Thought's peak, my Friend,
Thou countedst years as so much coin to spend
On It, and would'st have thanked death that it used
Bland age, not dull disease, to make an end.

It will not fret thy gentle sleep, my dear
Eratosthenes, that thy honoured bier
Is laid not in Cyrene with thy sires;
For thy bones here seem to keep our souls near!

Dionysius, of Cyzicus.

240 B.C.

A CHOICE

Anth. Pal., IX. 359.

Advise my course.
Public life?
"Angry dealings, bitter strife."
Shall I then just stay at home?
"No change of thought when mean cares come?"
A farm? "You to turn the soil!
Ruin dainty limbs with toil!"
A sea-life? "Quake, make a to do,
When the stormy winds do blow?"
At least why not try to carve
A fortune abroad?
"And starve
If without, and if with, pelf,
Lose it to thieves, and yourself!"
Think you it is wise to wed?—
"A flirt—be in constant dread!"
Then a bachelor I'll be.
"Twiddle thumbs for company."
Children? "Just a plague and care."
None? "Childless house maimed affair."
Youth's thoughtless; I'll fix when sage.
"Yes, decide in doting age!"
Well, choose for me, if you can,
Some lot you'll not straightway ban.
"Pray in the alternative,
Not be, or if born, not live!"

Posidippus.

240 B.C.

A KISS

Anth. Pal., V. 261.

Wine I love not; but if you would thus steal
My soul away, then let your lips first feel
The cup's brim. Offer it me; I am lost;
Rule myself no more; to and fro am tost;
Yet, I aver! no winecup—'tis the kiss;
The cup mere porter, messenger of bliss!

Agathias, of Myrina Æolia (and Ben Jonson), A.D. 536.

"OYEZ! OYEZ!"

Anth. Pal., V. 177.

Stole from his bed at first dawn! Just now!
Back feathered; armed, quiver and bow.
Chatter endless; on tap glucose tears;
Sharp as needle; quite without fears.

"Father? thought all knew; but deny,
Shirking responsibility.
I am afraid for my good name.
He'd ruin any parents' fame.

"Catch ere starts poaching. I guess where,
Sly Fox, you would set your first snare.
He will lurk in Zenophile's eyes.
Ho! he's there! Thither, and surprise!"

Meleager, of Gadara.

60 B.C.

BONA VERBA

Anth. Pal., V. 176.

"Fie! horrid Demon, Love!"
What do I get
By the kindling of all this heat?
The Babe smirks at the whole! each epithet
Ministers to his self-conceit!

The wonder to me is how the Divine
Apparition who gleaming came,
Queen of Beauty, out of the cool, blue brine,
Should have borne a fiery Flame!

Meleager, of Gadara.

MATERNAL WEAKNESS

Anth. Pal., V. 178.

"To be sold"; yes, although asleep
At his Mother's breast. What! I keep
Hardened little Impudence! born
Snub-nosed, winged, with nails! Why, I'm torn
To bits. If I complain, he cries.
Neighbours find him with fist in eyes,
Weeping. When none, he's sure, can hear,
Begins to laugh, and mock, and jeer.
A self-willed, sharp-eyed tattler, rude,
And with no sense of gratitude
Even to Me! A regular
Terror! Ah! to pack him afar!
Outward merchants might be glad
Of the offer—a likely lad!
Come, bid!
O but the pretty face
Is puckered up, all wet, a mess
Of tears! No, will be good as gold!
Stay with Zonophile—shan't be sold!"

MELEAGER, OF GADARA.

LOVE PERJURIES

Anth. Pal., V. 8.

Holy Night! Lamp! Joint witnesses! We both
Chose none others with whom to plight our troth.
I never to part, he love always, swore;
And Ye attested the mutual oath.

Then what, O Night, if, mocking, he says now
That on water a lover writes his vow?
And, kind Guide of us twain, that lightest him
To new mistresses, what, Lamp, sayest Thou?

Meleager, of Gadara.

A NARCOTIC

Anth. Pal., VII. 195.

Grasshopper, field Muse, that with shrilling beat
On responsive wings of harmonious feet,
Lyre's mimic, tricked sleep to my restless couch,
Once again exert thy kind art, and cheat

With a coaxing refrain my wakeful care;
And at earliest dawn I will prepare
Thy dewy plants, and add fresh, pearly spray.
Richly wilt thou have earned thy simple fare.

Meleager, of Gadara.

FALSE ALARM!

Anth. Pal., XII. 147.

Forced away! And bold savage to use arms
Against the proved mistress of all Love's charms!
Torches! Pursue!
But! sure—I know those feet!
Back, fleeing Heart, to your Breast! Glow, and beat!

Meleager, of Gadara.

EMPTIED QUIVER

Anth. Pal., V. 198.

Could Heliodore's ankle harbour guile,
Demo's golden locks, Timarion's bow'r,
Slumbrous Anticlee's voluptuous smile,
Or Dorothy, just an innocent flow'r?

How suspect these each mistress of one charm?
Until, tortured with pain, robbed of all rest,
I spied Cupid, source of all arts and harm,
In flight, quiver void, each shaft in my breast!

Meleager, of Gadara.

BRIDAL AND FUNERAL

Anth. Pal., VII. 182.

But now the evening flutes had called the Bride,
Carista, to her glad Bridegroom's home;
The wedding chamber that had opened wide,
Had clashed but now, for the sweet Wife was come.

Dawn but now had risen, with maids to take
Gay leave of the pair, by good Hymen led;
When a hush, a sob, a shriek, to awake
A Town! and marriage brands lighting the Dead!

MELEAGER, OF GADARA.

TO MY LOVE

Anth. Pal., V. 144.

Now flower early snow-flakes; daffodils
Woo the showers; and wave upon the hills
Lilies; now dearest, timeliest, that blows,
Zenophila, Persuasion's Rose!

Meadows, ye are bright, and ye too are sweet.
Souls must dance and sing as your breath they meet.
But adore.—She to whom my heart bows down,
Excels far your most fragrant crown!

MELEAGER, OF GADARA.

TWO IN ONE

Anth. Pal., V. 155.

Love has moulded sweet-tongued Heliodore, the whole,
In my heart, life life. Hail Death, if She claim her soul!

Meleager, of Gadara.

MAGIC OF LONGING

Anth. Pal., XII. 53.

Well-found sea-faring merchantmen, who sail
Through Helle's strait, catching a fair North gale,
If ye chance to see on the Cöan shore
Phanion, my Phanion, gazing o'er,
Tell her my longing shall waft me across —
For no sailor I—to her Isle of Cos.
Kindness to lovers' pleases Zeus; He'll blow
Winds that serve you wherever ye would go!

Meleager, of Gadara.

A BOUQUET

Anth. Pal., V. 147.

White violets, myrtle, crocus, advance;
Laughing lilies, hyacinths: lo! your chance;
Amorous roses: all things bright and sweet—
Haste, trick yourselves, paint yourselves, and compete!
Heliodore has bidden me entwine
A garland that shadowing brows Divine,
Shall mingle the fragrances garden blown
With the more bewitching that are her own!

Meleager, of Gadara.

AN APPEAL BEYOND

Anth. Pal., VII. 475.

The dear past re-lives, as here my Heliodore I mourn!
O that my much weeping forth of tears in floods would distil
A pure essence of longing for days that cannot return,
From yearnings, immortal, memories that time cannot kill.
Pity! Pity! the pining, though Thou the dead art among;
Though I know the folly of hoping from Acheron grace
Yet the King of Terrors I'll besiege with all force of song,
Until I dream my cries pierce as if we spoke face to face.
Hades has stolen my flow'r in all its freshness of bloom,
Soiled it with dust; but I kneel low; "Take her, Earth, to thy breast;
Mother Universal, cleanse from the squalor of the tomb;
My Darling has had many griefs; comfort, bless her with rest!"

Meleager, of Gadara.

"REQUIESCAT!"

Anth. Pal., VII. 419.

"Softly, Friend; for among the elders shares
Meleager, Eukrates' Son, the sleep,
Age's due, his, most; confidant of cares,
Muses', Graces', Love's, who now laugh, now weep.

"Blest, God's Tyre, where he grew to man's estate,
Holy Gadara, and loved Cos, where rolled
So smoothly, and so pleasantly, the weight
Of years that he'd forgotten he was old.

"Receipt; 'the soil, be of it!' was his way;
Were one who passed Syrian, then "Salām";
If Phœnician, "Naidios," he'd say;
'Chairé,' Greek; Hail—'stranger, Friend';—each
the same!"

Meleager, of Gadara.

IN DEATH UNDIVIDED

Anth. Pal., VII. 378.

Heliodorus passed first. One short hour, and by his side
His Wife, Diogeneia, laid herself, with joy, and died.
Nowhere else at night had she lain since he clasped her a bride.
Other couch than his fond arms would have been a world too wide.

Apollonides.

A.D. 14–37.

MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

Anth. Pal., XI. 364;

He! thing of nought; mere drudge; and loved! See his Wife!
Shame! how lord he quite of another soul and life!

Bianor, of Bithynia.

17 B.C.

INDECENT HASTE

Anth. Pal., VII. 671.

Greedy Charon! Force young Attalos on board your
old hulk!
He would have kept till grey hairs; could have found
no means to skulk?

Bianor, of Bithynia.

DESOLATE

Anth. Pal., VII. 337.

My Bride died; I clung to her babe. Can spite
Vex blind Fate that a remnant should remain,
A spark, if feeble, to transmit the light—
A link—to remind—of a broken chain?

In pity, on the bosom of my Dear
Lay, Proserpine, an Infant spirit; this
May echo my Farewell, and She will hear;
Bear her even a shadow of my kiss!

Bianor, of Bithynia.

THE FARMER AFLOAT

Anth. Pal., VII. 532.

"Rash Eteocles, to let the sea lure
Me into trafficking in foreign wares
From tillage of the ground, solid and sure,
Toils to which I was born, and rustic cares.

If I risked the freaks of the Tyrrhene wave,
Rocked on its back! what could I but expect
To dive headforemost into a salt grave!
Crushed, by no threshing-floor puff this, and wreckt!

Isidorus Ægeates, of Ægae.

50 B.C.

OF THE COMMON KIND

Anth. Pal., IX. 546.

Yachting for me? A bed made
Of straw on the stern be laid,
With leathern sheeting to run
For screen against rain or sun.
My food? From a stove, stone-built,
Let flame break out, not where thou wilt,
But it, and bubble the pot
With dinner that, hot and hot,
The cabin-boy serves. Ah! meat
I see cooked—Divine to eat!
Though table a ship's plank scored
And notched, sauce, spray shipped aboard;
Music, boatswain's whistle; sport,
Pitch and toss—first rate each sort!
Last week I had that same treat;
'Twill be long before 'tis beat!
You fine people, I dare say,
Might think it no holiday;
But I'm one that like to find
Myself of the Common Kind.

Antiphilus, of Byzantium,
68–54 B.C.

APOLLO'S CHOIR

Anth. Pal., X. 17.

Let, Harbour God, smooth waters last,
Till the Point's surf, where too Thou Lord, be passed.
The Narrows crossed, thy work is done.
We're then His care who rules Delphi and Sun.
Singers we all, a sacred band;
And Phœbus has Zephyrs at His command!

Antiphilus, of Byzantium.

"TO-MORROW"

Anth. Pal., VII. 630.

"To-morrow!" sure, you will to-morrow lull,
Wind, that bars me, but one day off, from home.
"To-morrow" still murmured my lips, when full
Hell, broken loose, had hurled on me my doom.

Banish "to-morrows!" Nemesis lays wait
For common speech that claims to be so wise
On the Future, as to anticipate
By light phrases men's unspun destinies.

Antiphilus, of Byzantium.

CLAUDIA HOMONŒA

Kaibel. Epig. Græc. 6268.

Clear voice resistless beyond Sirens' song,
Winner of more hearts than Love's Queen,
Homonœa, the sparkle of whose tongue
Was harder to fix than the sheen

Of a swallow's wing, lies here; leaving woe
To Atimetus; endless tears;—
As if life's ruler that watched their love grow
From childhood, cares what hearts he sears!

Atimetus.

68–54 B.C.

"LODGING," NOT "BOARD"

Miserly Asclepiades happened to see a mouse;
And asked: "Dearest; what do you in my house?"
"In your larder we looked," sweetly replied she; "not for board,
But lodging; room for that it can afford."

Lucilius, of Rome.

68–54 B.C.

FLATTER BY IMITATION

Anth. Pal., XI. 68.

Some say Nicylla dyes her hair. Then, why
Not seek where best black dye is sold, and buy.

Lucilius, of Rome.

HEART, NOT INCHES

Anth. Pal., XI. 95.

A mouse thought Makron sleeping good to eat
Hauled him homewards by one of his small feet.
Makron woke; gripped, choked the mouse: "Zeus," he said:
"Heracles is gone: I will serve instead!"

Lucilius, of Rome.

"INCREDIBLE!"

Anth. Pal., XII. 177.

"The hour was come when we must wish 'Good-Night!'
And I part from Moiris, though not forget.
I to journey before earliest light;
Neither could foresee when again we met.

"Trifles we talked burn on my brain;—not this—
That her lips, with 'Farewell!' approached to mine,
And upon them hovered, fluttered, a kiss!
Can I be sure of what would be Divine?

"No! fool not to be certain it but 'seemed!'
'True!' and I still be tramping Earth a clod!
Had Moiris glorified me as I dreamed.
I should be, with her, mounting Heav'n, a God!"

STRATON, OF SADIS.

138 B.C.

A GRATEFUL BLACKSMITH

Anth. Pal., VI. 117.

See! tongs; pincers; hammer, that has swung—how long! in the heat;
Dinting, dinted, on the anvil, with ringing beat, beat, beat.
Polycrates, his stint done, grateful for home, children's ease
That his muscles welded out of fire, gives Hephæstus these!

Pancrates.

100 B.C.

MOTHERHOOD

Anth. Pal., IX. 254.

Three Sons I bore, all for the fire to have;
The dust of each of them lies in its grave.
Yearning for motherhood's cares, humbler grown,
I anchored hope on a womb not my own;
Adopted a son; but had not the grace
Of grafting the scion of a fresh race.
"Philænion's," he died; yes, mine, from whom
The title "Son" is heritage of doom!

Philippus, of Thessalonica.

100 B.C.

RESCUE

Anth. Pal., VI. 331.

Alcon, as he happened one day to pass,
Saw his Babe, where it lay upon the grass,
In the coil of a deadly snake.
The dread
As bow he bent! the joy, as the shaft sped
Just within the monster's jaws. Stark in death,
It still entwined the little one beneath.
To remind of kind Fortune, and skilled stroke,
See! the quiver in the neighbouring oak!

Gætulicus.

A SCOURGE

Anth. Pal., VII. 71.

"Lo! a monument, washed by bitter brine,
Kin to the Muse's fount of viperine
Gall that inspired Archilochus, and dyed
Mild Helicon blood-red to sate his pride.
A sorry triumph this of spiteful song,
Knotting for young girls' necks a triple thong!"
Softly, Wayfarer! or chance you may have
About your ears a wasps' nest from this grave.

Gætulicus.

A WARNING

Anth. Pal., IX. 87.

Blackbird, ware oak; drop not thy velvet song
From its top spray; hasten thou to the vine;
Soft yet clear, grey-green foliage among,
Chant; a happy sanctuary is thine.

Oaks foster misletoe, thy deadly bane.
Bacchus for grapes and song has equal love.
Never will His vine condescend to stain
Its faith by snares for minstrels of the grove.

Marcus Argentarius.

50 B.C.

METAMORPHOSIS

Anth. Pal., V. 113.

Slow scholar you, Sosicrates: "No more
Are loved?" Why, of course not, now you are poor.
You were an Adonis, Spikenard, and Myrrh.
Pray then how did your Menophila err,
Forgetting you in the gentleman down
On his luck, address none, country or Town?
Be quicker, and learn Love gives not away
Pearls of price but to them with cash to pay.

Marcus Argentarius.

AN ORDERLY MAN

Anth. Pal., IX. 270.

Who leads a more ordered life than I?
As soon as the stars come out,
I am up, and watch them in the sky,
While till dawn they wheel about.
Yet, not so haughty as to confine
My regards to troops Divine,
Oft I condescend to join the choir
Of maidens and youths below,
Touch the resounding Lydian lyre,
And bind with flowers my brow.
But a "roisterer?" Shame! find a life
Clean as mine of brawl and strife!
I approve myself whene'er I pray
For habits decent and straight,
Old established songs to sing and play,
The old stars to contemplate.
Survey the firmament; as you gaze,
See! an image of my ways!
Why, ev'n Kosmos and I at sun down—
Whether copy there or here—
Figure alike with the lyre and crown
When we show, each in his sphere.
And of Heaven's host each starry gem
Nods at me as I at them!

Marcus Argentarius.

UNREMARKABLE

Anth. Pal., VII. 260.

It is not my fault you find nought worth reading on this stone;
First to last, nothing happened worth lamenting in my life.
Her I wooed I kept from youth to age gladly for my own;
And three sons by her I settled, each household, with a wife.

Each had children too, who won, and returned their grandsire's love;
Wooed him to share their infant games, let him rock them to rest;
Agreed to think him of themselves, though not so quick to move,
And had, above all, the grace that not one of them distressed

An affectionate heart by a grave sickness, or a death.—
Thus survived they, one and all, with their parents, to attend,
With a tear, not a pang, as I drew a last gentle breath!
So, what's worth recording of the Old Soul but start and end?

Carphyllides.

PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION

Anth. Pal., XI. 121.

Agelaus chanced, operating on a man, to kill.
"Lucky wretch!" he cried: "Might have limped for life, but for my skill!"

Nicarcus, of Rome.

100 B.C.

A DOCTOR'S TOUCH

Anth. Pal., XI. 113.

Markos, not pulse-feeling, but in worship, touched Zeus's bust.
Mutes the next day shouldered the marble from His Shrine as "dust!"

Nicarcus, of Rome.

DEADLIER

Anth. Pal., XI. 186.

Screech-owls' notes are murderous; but themselves have to beware
Of attending concerts where Demophilos sings an air.
Nicarcus, of Rome.

KEEPING IT UP

Anth. Pal., V. 39.

"Bound to die? where I a gymnast, t'would be the same?
Why mind then if by gout I drink myself dead-lame?
Either way be carried? So, wine – let lamps be lit!
While life still laughs, we'll make a merry night of it!"
Nicarcus, of Rome.

SURE OF HIS PLACE

Anth. Pal., XI. 82.

Charmos, the Long Distance Runner, went in, with others five,
For a race in Arcadia, and, running it, came out
Seventh. "With but six in it!" says a critic: "Sixth."
Forgive
My chance omission, good Sir; I will show what caused your doubt.

The sixth was a Backer, who, cloaked and booted, walked the course,
Ending some feet ahead. He had been leading with a cry:
"Wake up, Charmos!"
If six Backers—he'd ranked six places worse.
None on a course can make him pass them much as they may try!

Nicarcus, of Rome.

AN IMPARTIAL JUDGMENT

Anth. Pal., XI. 82.

STONE-DEAF men, disputing, came to a Justice, who,
As chanced, was himself much stone-deafer than the two.
"Rent," the Plaintiff alleged, was "five months overdue."
"Nuisance!" the other, when "never is dust in view,
Since I thresh at night."
"Why"—the Judge looked each in face:
"Quarrel, and about a Mother? Fie! a disgrace;
She belongs to both; rejoice each to be the host;
Maintain her, the pair, in common and share the cost!"

NICARCUS, OF ROME.

BABE KALLIMACHOS

Anth. Pal., VII. 308.

MY earthly span was bounded by five years;
But Death, called "ruthless," took no plaintive child.
Be the tiny grave watered by no tears;
The cup, or life's or ill's; was not o'er filled!

LUCIAN, OF SAMOSATA.

A.D 120–65.

A NOT UNCOMMON MISTAKE

Anth. Pal., XI. 429.

In a company all tipsy Tom tried to stay
Sober, but 'twas questioned if he was drunk, not they.

LUCIAN, OF SAMOSATA.

THE WORLD-BARD

Anth. Pal., IX. 97.

If Andromache's pray'r still rings—Troy-town
Still from its foundations comes crashing down—
Ajax flings from his ship defiance still—
And hoofs maul Hector under Priam's crown

Of tow'rs—whence deathlessness of glory, woe,
But from a Bard, to whom the tale we owe—
Boast he of Earth's slope, Equator to Pole -
Music that, free—Time, Place—swells to and fro?

ALPHEIUS (EMPEROR AUGUSTUS), OF MITYLENE.
A.D. 10.

A TENANT FOR LIFE

Anth. Pal., X. 6.

You are rich, and then? Going to the grave,
What are you dragging after you—your gold?
Waste-time amassing riches. All you have,
At your life's ending, then slips from your hold.

PALLADAS, OF ALEXANDRIA.

A.D. 400.

WASTE TALK

Anth. Pal., XI. 300.

Much chatter, Man; when, as shortly, you go beneath,
Thought will cease; while you have it, use, to think on death.

PALLADAS, OF ALEXANDRIA.

FOR WHAT?

Anth. Pal., X. 58.

Toil, "Life" nicknamed, clothe flesh naked at birth,
And waste pains to strip, and fling back to earth!

Palladas, of Alexandria (or Lucian).

LONG-SUFFERING EARTH

Anth. Pal., X. 73.

Earth that bears all bears you; so, bear, be borne.
If ill
You bear, rage and groan, It that bore bears with you
still.

Palladas, of Alexandria.

BIRTHDAYS

Anth. Pal., X. 79.

As night goes, we are re-born, day by day;
Keep nothing of the old Life, not a shred.
Strangers we to all; it has passed away.
Life we start each morning is in its stead.
Why talk, as in excess, of years bygone?
To-day, reckon, dear Friend, from it alone!

PALLADAS, OF ALEXANDRIA.

ONCE FOR ALL

Anth. Pal., X. 59.

THE terror of Death! can Itself compare
With that? Ev'rywhere, always on the wing!
Then, balance the descent against the scare—
Painful the menace, but no second sting!

PALLADAS, OF ALEXANDRIA.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Anth. Pal., XII. 44.

Life is all a stage; and Man acts thereon
A play. Playfully perform your brief part.
When the curtain descends your turn is done.
Or take its pains for real; and bear the smart!
Palladas, of Alexandria (and Shakespeare).

THE WORTH OF LIFE?

Anth. Pal., X. 123.

If he escaped transit through a death, Man could,
Would not he, for life's pests, a dismal brood,
Shirk the boon—sure, Nemesis will be paid
Amply for rare, grudged interludes of good?

Thank not Life for sweets ours through Nature's care—
The orbs of sun and moon, earth, sea, stars, air.
Man may admire their power, and their charm;
But, though he lived not, they would be as fair.
Æsopus.

HEAVENLY LOVE

Anth. Pal., Append., Planud., 201.

"I SEE neither bow nor arrows; yet surely both Thou hast;
Twang! and here a shaft in the centre of a heart fixed fast!
Wondrous too thy archery, art with which the flight was guessed;
For we three stood side by side; and the wound is in the breast!
'Wound'; yet no cry of 'Treason!' No agony in the face;
Only, a glory, a rapture, as for a lover's grace!
Again, and though without wings, you mounted skywards erewhile!
Your torch—its scorching flame—you kiss, embrace it with a smile!
Lastly, the four crowns you bear, one worn blooming on your brow,
Three carried, as myrrh fragrant, red as roses, white as snow?"
"Stranger, not I from Market-Aphrodité, or of Earth;
Conceived to minister to riot, nourish vulgar mirth.
My charge is to lift humanity, give sight to the blind

By true learning, and lead, purified, up to Heaven, Mind.
My band of Souls, with aught mean burnt out by my torch, will twine
From Celestial Gardens wreaths for the Virtues all Divine.
If I crown myself first, 'tis that my burden's to control.
Each of the Three rules its State; Wisdom's Empire is the Whole!"

MARIANUS, SCHOLASTICUS.

FLOTSAM

Anth. Pal., VII. 218.

No stone tomb weighs on Erasippos; he
Has his mausoleum, th'Ægean Sea;
His bones in spot unknown decaying lie;
Track them if you can by the seagulls' cry.

GLAUCUS, OF ATHENS.

COUNTRY LIFE

Athenæus. Deipno., XV. 673–8

My liking, Philotheros, is to eat
And sleep where over spacious fields of wheat
The west wind blows freely to my delight,
Nor am I plagued with clamour of the street.

Bed soft enough for me upon the ground,
Native osiers, wherewith Carians bound
Their brows. No fear but that first when down I lie
On my low pallet, slumber will have found

Access to my eyes. Yet, first, Wine please find,
And the Muses' Lyre—quite to suit my mind
That we may sing Hera, our Island's Queen,
And move Her to remain gracious and kind!

NICÆNETUS, OF ABDERA.

250 B.C.

ONE PLANK

Anth. Pal., IX. 269.

One beam. Antagoras—law says he might—
Tipped his mate off, with death for two in sight.
Yet observe the Fates' fidgety distaste
For profiting by letter though of right!

They, while the loser swam, till he touched ground,
Moved a sword-fish to deal a mortal wound
On the winner's limb hanging by the log.
The Fates always find an Avenging Hound!

Antipater of Thessalonica.

10 B.C.

AMPHIPOLIS

Anth Pal., VII. 705.

Nature abides; wide Strymon, and the flood
Of Hellespont. Where monuments have stood,
A tomb—a temple of great Artemis—
The Ages spare traces
Of the hot blood.

Warring fury, eloquence, for the sake
Of dominion o'er Athens once chief stake,
Now, on either bank of Strymon you find
Rags of fisher life hard from sleep to wake.

Antipater, of Thessalonica.

MYCENÆ

Anth. Pal., IX. 28.

Here I am, "Mycenæ"; dust, name; no more.
Yet the Hellenic race revered that name.
Search about for the secret of my fame;
This Gate, its Lions, the whole site explore,
Swept by neighbours' spite bare as the sea shore.
Ev'n myself would doubt can this be the same
Mycenæ whence the two Atreidæ came,
Were't not easier to kill than restore,
And I bethink me of Troy rich and great,
How I trampled its walls, and slew the old
King Priam's sons, such my prowess and State!
"Remember I that?" Has not Homer told
It? Age might trick me; but at any rate
You must trust Homer; and by Him I hold!

Pompeius.

14 B.C.–A.D. 37.

SARDIS

Anth. Pal., IX. 645.

'Well, Tmolos, to crown me with flowers Queen;
For first by me was Zeus's Godhead seen.
With scorn I refused to betray our Lord.
If I faithless, where else had shelter been?

Good choice I foster-mother of His Child.
Ah! bravely the golden-haired Infant smiled,
Glittering himself with a larger light
Than the glory that Semele beguiled.

Still like his Father, when matured a God,
He remembered me. I his dear abode.
From my breast his fondest-loved milk he pressed.
Earth envies me Sire's and Son's gratitude!"

Macedonius, the Consul.

Temp. Justinian I.

QUESTIONS UNANSWERED

Anth. Pal., VII. 566.

Earth, that gave body! Birth-Goddess, shelter in
womb!
My course between is run; now, Both, Farewell!
I depart hence; but whither? Whose being? from
whom
Crossed I to whom? and what then?—who can tell?

Macedonius, the Consul.

LITTLE FROM LITTLE

Anth. Pal., VI. 98.

Great Demeter! King Seasons! pray you rate
Harvest offerings by their source, not weight.
Ye Who winnow, turn the furrows, can tell
How sorry a lot to Heronax fell.
It shames me to spread starved ears, potherbs, here;
But my scrag of hill-land! How better cheer!

Zonas (Diodorus, of Sardis).

88 B.C.

A LOYAL WIFE

Anth. Pal., VII. 555.

"As I looked on my Husband, and felt my last thread was spun,
I praised God Death, and God Hymen, the pair;
Hymen, that he had coupled us, Death, that he took the one,
Leaves our offspring in such a father's care!"

JOANNES BARBUCALLUS, OF ARBUCATE IN SPAIN.
A.D. 551.

SEPULCHRAL BOASTS

Anth. Pal., VII. 307.

"Look! my name, country, and stock! You will find
When you read, I come of no common kind,
And I lived handsomely."
"True, I dare say;
Though why ask it of all who pass this way?"

PAULUS SILENTIARUS, OF BYZANTIUM.
A.D. 483–565.

CARES

Anth. Pal., X. 76.

Life's self engenders no charm. Banish care
By whatever means you can cleanse the breast.
It is the certain seedplot of grey hair.
Money? Yes, just for needs; beyond, starry rest;

Money eats souls; is madness; hence you find
Ease in death for high, bliss in life for low.
Ah! for Wisdom to smooth paths that mankind
Might not add to life's stress more loads, more woe!

Paulus Silentiarius, of Byzantium.

A REBEL

Anth. Pal., V. 256.

Galatea slammed her doors in my face. Her scorn—
Words to match—snapped the cords that had held me.—
By morn,
Just one sleepless night's freedom for a slave forlorn,
Of the year I had vowed to live apart—

Yes, alas!—at dawn I was upon my way straight
To take up my dog's post at the accustomed gate,
Forgetful of all my oaths, Oh Heavens! to wait
With the fawning of a penitent heart.

Paulius Silentiarius, of Byzantium.

SOUL AND BODY

Anth. Pal., VII. 553.

Zosima, Death has freed your body; O that we,
Your's, the Slave's, masters, might live here with souls as free!

Damaskius, the Neo-Platonist.

A.D. 490.

A TREATY

Anth. Pal., VI. 79.

Farmer Stratonicos, I, and Thou, God Pan of the crest,
Stipulate, where my corn land ends, and starts Thy forest-wild,
I plough no ground beyond, as this stone column will attest;
Nor here Thy deer trespass, as Thou approvest while I build.

Let Thy herd rove thy waste, and harvests ripen upon mine.
Earth has room for us both; and freely dances my own blood,
As I lie awake, and hear the call of thy horn Divine
To thy Bride, Echo, our neighbour too, to beat heath and wood.

Agathias.

A.D. 536.

IGNOTI

THE HOSTESS

Anth., V. 135.

Trim, though comfortably stout,
And well-padded all about;
Gifted with but one true ear,
So, may stand where she can't hear;
High-necked, the throat long and smooth,
Gay ripple through rose of mouth—
Where could Bacchus find,
Muses, Venus, defter mind,
One with gayer, sweeter laugh,
Apter to provoke to quaff?
If we might regret one "rub"
In stewardess of a club,
Alas! but when we are full,
Our hostess sits dry and dull;
And when, as there may be times,
One thirsts at the midnight chimes,
She grudges even a sip;
Sure, that's not good fellowship?

MY GARDEN

Kaibel. Epig. Græc., 548.

This is my garden. No red sorrel, rude,
Dry bramble here may venture to intrude.
Be jonquils, marjoram, violets found;
But roses all shall wrap my Darling round.

REMEMBER!

Anth. Pal., VII. 667.

Linger not with vain wailings by my tomb;
No special cause is for them in my case.
Groan not as for Amazonia's doom.
"Remember!" grant a Mother, Wife, that grace!

DESERTED

Kaibel. Epig. Græc., 204.

Cleio, once all mine, whose last breath—at home
Only with me—died on my breast—
Cleio, my joy, now my despair become,
Where finds thy head a place of rest?

Pure, ever mourned, to leave Theios alone!
Though not him, for he is no more!
I, and the hopes I nursed in life, are gone;
Thine they roam, shadows, the dark shore.

PAN INVITES

Append., Planud., 227.

See! green turf, Wayfarer; throw yourself down, and rest.
Your limbs are unstrung. The wind in the West,
Rustling in the pine, just avails this sultry noon
To accompany the cicala's tune.

The hill-top shepherd in the planes' shade, by the brook,
Pipes. Out sleep the Dog-Star in my cool nook.
You will have tracked the stream before dawn to its rise,
Hearken to Pan, your Host. Let Him advise!

THE CICALA'S COMPLAINT

Anth., IX. 373.

"Shepherds, why hunt you us down at mid-day
On upland wastes, or in shadowy dales,
Where fearlessly we rocked on slender spray,
Chartered we, the Nymphs' wayside nightingales.

"Kill not innocents that cheer you with song!
Death to thieves, starling, blackbird, thrush. Be good
Friends to Us. We have never done you wrong;
Grudge not the green leaves and fresh dew, our food!"

A SMILE FROM PERSEPHONE

Anth., VIII. 483.

Inexorable! Death! Tear from a Mother's arms
Babe Kallæschros, innocent boy,
To call a fleeting smile to Persephone's charms
By the present of a new toy!

A NAME

Synesius—Epist., 127.

Of asps, toads, vipers, and of Laodiceans, beware!
Mad dogs too, and Laodiceans, whate'er name they bear.

WHAT MORE?

Anth. Pal., VII. 340.

Yes; She was dead; and Marathonis laid
Nicopolis—till tears' source dried, bewept—
In her coffin.
More to be done or said?
What more upon this Earth for him bereft?

PAN THE HEALER

Kaibel., 802 ; *Kaibel. Epig. Græc.*

Accept, this work of my hands that I bring ;
Pan, Minstrel, Healer. For Thee fill
Nymphs fresh fountains in vale, on hill ;
Following Thee, at midnight, dance and sing.

'Twas Thou bad'st me rise cured, when, as I lay,
Smit by disease, wide yawned my grave.
Thou camest, no mere dream, to save,
Visible to my Children at mid-day.

A BABY

Kaibel. Epig. Græc., 576.

Snatched after a bare taste of life away—
For good or ill to me, how can I say ?
If Death's spite to a baby, 'tis Death's way ;
Yet, why haste ? All ages are his sure prey.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Anth. Pal., IX. 675.

"Fear no more my peak, and its scare; forget,
Sailors, the mists that lurked for you by night.
Bless the Asclepiades; pay that debt
Of wanderers for my far gleaming light!"

VAGRANCY IN THE BLOOD

Kaibel., 640.

Cappadocia, that is known by some
Who read this as "Garden-land," was my home.
My parents ranked there as of good estate;
So might have "Glaphuros" but for the rate
He set freedom at. Thus, I roamed, East, West,
Prizing, as "Critical," change above rest.
Fortune would smile, life frown; I boast, the whole
Of my sixty years I kept a free soul!

LETHE

Anth., VII. 346.

Good Sabinus, a monument is this
Small stone to my memory of large bliss.
When you at my name pause upon the brink
Of Lethe, cease, if Laws permit, to drink.

MOTHER EARTH

Anth., VII. 321.

Earth, clasp old Amyntichos to thy breast;
He has toiled for Thee; mind;—and give him rest—
The olives he set, his pains to adorn
Thy face with joyous vines, and golden corn!
How he led rills to cheer each thirsty plot,
And herbs and fruit blessed, where he trod, the spot!
Fall soft then, kind Earth, where his grey head lies;
Let his grave's Spring Flow'rs take news of the skies!

A SONGSTRESS

Kaibel. Epig. Græc., 548.

Dark-eyed Muse, as I was, in voice as name,
Suddenly stone-dumb, I, a nightingale,
In a modest grave lie with brightness, fame;
May the dust lie light, nor let music fail!

THE HIGHWAY GOD

Anth., X. 12.

In the shade of this juniper, Wayfarers, rest
A brief space, and fear not ill, with Hermes in trust.
No loose rabble for Him; but He welcomes a guest
Limping, honestly foot-worn with heat and the dust.

Ah! the cool breeze, leafy screen to stone bench, and fount's
Gurgling from the rock! You here, escaped from outside
The burnt road, and thick breath of the Dog as he mounts,
Praise the God whom it pleased this retreat to provide!

DATELESS

Anth., VII. 342.

Dying, we tell our children we await.
But "There" for all arrivals is one date.

FORTUNE'S EXCUSE

Anth. Pal., IX. 530.

Out of no regard for thee Fortune granted thy advance;
'Twas to prove that down to Thee any can be raised by Chance!

SPARTA?

Anth. Pal., VII. 723.

This, untamed, Virgin Sparta!
Where in shade
Of tall groves by Eurotas maidens played,
Etolians light fires, camp as they please;
Birds build in lone street-dust; for here no trees
Invite a nest. Ev'n a wolf will not stay
Where sounds no bleat to offer hope of prey.

ASLEEP

Append., Planud., 146.

Please, touch not the "Ariadne." She might leap,
In quest of fleeing Theseus, from her sleep!

A BEE-MASTER

Anth., VII. 717.

Naiads and Uplands, bid the chill, fresh breeze
  Tell, as wing their spring course the bees,
That they have lost old Leukippos; he lives
  No longer to tend his loved hives.

A last winter's night killed him setting snares,
  In the dark, for galloping hares.
The dells will miss him, risen as from sleep,
  Quitting his hut beside the steep.

DEFYING FORTUNE

Anth., IX. 133.

Once married—and, foolhardy, woo again,
Shipwrecked, yet embark!—Chance was kind, in vain.

ONLY A DOG

Kaibel. Epig. Græc., 627.

Wayfarer, if you see beside
The path this tomb, do not deride,
Learning for whom the stone.
Man wept; a man's hands raised the mound;
Graved the story, if of a hound,
Whose death leaves him alone.

IRONY OF CIRCUMSTANCE AND PALLIATION

Anth. Pal., IX. 138.

Pity me! now young, and too poor; shall, when rich, be too old.
"Patience! be heir; you may save age from superfluous gold!"

LAND, AND ITS LORDS

Anth. Pal., IX. 74.

"An Achæmenid spoke of Me as 'mine';
And now Menippus claims Me for his line.
Talk of 'his' and 'theirs' is mankind's romance;
Land shifts not; ownership's a word for chance."

LIFE'S ANTIDOTE

Anth. Pal., X. 118.

How, whence, came I to be? Arrived, why go?
"Might learn?" How to start from sheer blank to know?
Born nought, nothingness, to be nought again,
Man is doomed to an endless to and fro.

Useless to fight. Let run a fountain-head,
The Wine God's Own. If not a cure, instead
It is for human ills an antidote.
Black is our life. Drink, and it will glow red!

ON ERINNA

Anth. Pal., VII. 12.

We deemed it Spring, promise of honeyed song.
Alas! the music was a dying note.
Sweet Erinna, with a fate-driven throng,
Was crossing Acheron in Charon's boat.

But mute at nineteen! harmony Divine!
Shall one turn of Fate's wheel shear inspired dreams?
So fair as a soul cries out at Death; will shine
A sister Muse, and inspire Epic themes!

AN ENTREPÔT

Anth., X. 3.

"Vexed, dying far as Meroë from Athens? Why?
From here or there to Hades self-same is the route.
For the journey Down it matters not where we die;
All passengers for that port one wind bears straight out."

A GREATER MIRACLE

Append., Planud., 129.

"Niobe, I lived: 'Be stone,' Heav'n doomed, 'done!'"
"Live," cried Praxiteles, "I live from stone!"

A LIFE'S WORTH

Anth. Pal., V. 84.

Ah! had the kind lot been mine to be laid to rest,
Blest red rose, by those soft hands on that snowy breast.

TO ARTEMIS OF LIMNÆ

Anth., VI. 280.

Latona's virgin Daughter, hear!
And accept the child-gifts I bear;
The tambourine on which I played;
Net, binding curls that might have strayed;
Dolls, frocks; and painted ball I tossed;—
Last, Myself—Thine, if changed—not lost!
Guide Timareta still; her life;
Pure, Girl—to be as pure a Wife!

HALLOWED

Clemens Alexandrinus. Strom., V. 13.

God's House is pure like Him; who venture in
Impure in thought convict themselves of sin.

SUPERFLUOUS

Anth. Pal., VII. 309.

"Dionysius of Tarsus. Sixty. Married not.
And O that his Father had but chosen the same lot."

A FRIEND ON CALLIMACHUS

Anth. Pal., VII. 41.

What if your body lies among the dead,
Callimachus? the spirit sings elsewhere.
The Muses, when the cheer for feasts is spread,
Hail you to your place; 'tis with them you fare.

THE SWALLOW! THE SWALLOW!

A DRAMATIC appeal! By well-drilled city urchins! The Southern Spring's own sovereign summons by her winged harbinger! Bravado alternating with humility. "Everything--Anything!" Childhood intoxicated with the gay, flower-scented air. "Come forth all; dance and sing!"

And, withal, the pretty, musical Greek!

"Author?" We will hope, none; Earth-born, Air-born--Greek earth, Spring air! seek for nought else.

Mark the boy threat to housewife, young or old, plain or pretty, shy or scold. And blushing fear of having gone too far!

No cakes and comfits? What mind we? Any? Out and frolic all the same! Under a roof? No; at call of Spring!

But we may not bide. Stand we cannot. Feet will not be still!

THE SWALLOW SONG

Ho! the Swallow, the Swallow is here, and She brings
From the South, and its sunshine, all beautiful things!
Hovering o'er glossy black back, or close pressed
In joy and in love to her buff and white breast,
See how the sisterhood of the fair Hours
Before her can lay a carpet of flowers—
How violet, primrose, myrtle and sallow
Burst into bloom to welcome the Swallow!
Goodman, fling wide open the gate,
Let not my Lady Swallow wait!
Bustle! Bustle! where is the cake,
That here they know so well to bake,
And the wine?
Brimful beakers, please;
With a whole basketful of cheese.
Hungry and thirsty, and coming from far,
Our Lady's not very particular;
But white bread, or brown, be it crumb, be it crust,
Spread a table for Her you will; and you must
"Go as we came, and take nothing away?"
Her Ladyship does not put up with a Nay!
Good people, take heed! You hardly guess what
A spirit She has, the strong bill She has got;
She might peck-off the lintel, or door's-self; then where
To go in, or go out, with your door in the air?

Or, stay: who's there sitting? Why should we not
take
The trim little house wife? She's nicer than cake;
Our lady will tuck her tight under her wing;
Light weight for a Mistress who carries the Spring!
Says "she won't come?" Well, hand out to us
instead
A pancake, or bun, or a little pulled bread;
And a twelvemonth from now you'll be glad that you
gave;—
A penny in kindness worth's a pound that you save!
To givers the gain;
'Tis all one to the Swallow!
Open your doors to the Swallow, the Swallow!
Nobody keeps his door shut to the Swallow!
Merry urchins are we; and why not you too?
Just slip off your years, and come into our crew!
On, Swallow, on; and, Boys, all, follow, follow!
Hail to the Springtide! Thrice hail to the Swallow!

SAPPHO

SAPPHO

A LIST of Greek Poets is an obituary. Names of great singers far outnumber the living. Many of the dead were, as Archilochus, Alcæus, Menander, of supreme genius by the testimony of a public with the most fastidious literary discernment. Sappho's name is not among them. Very few are the complete short songs of hers which survive out of the multitude she composed. Yet she lives largely both as woman and writer. Of other poets fragments are reverently collected by and for the use of scholars. Fragments of hers are literature, and rank as poems. I am aware of no phenomenon like it. Discovery of a Book or Books of her Odes would be hailed throughout the civilized world. The joy would not be for repentance at the reparation for an unintelligible and stupid blunder at last. Simply, it would be, as if, instead of listening on a summer evening outside an open window to an admirable musician we had been beckoned by himself within.

The delightful event possibly may occur. It will not be in my time. For a substitute I have availed myself of the labour and sympathy of Mr. Henry Thornton Wharton. He brought together in a single volume, published in 1885, with a second and third editions in 1887 and 1895, the four complete Odes and 170 fragments of others, in the original, literally translated. In many

cases renderings into English verse by various authors, for the most part disappointing, were added. Let me ask pardon of any Greek scholar among chance readers that the rich array of enigmas fired my fancy to frame answers to a liberal proportion of the number. Perhaps the temptation to court a Phaethon's suicide was quickened rather than arrested by the threat above the versifier's head of a pick-axe at Herculaneum, or a fresh "find" in the neighbourhood of far Medinet-el-Fayum.

The degrees of presumption, I am aware, differ. Occasionally Sappho happened to have condensed into a few words her leading thought. Two lines, which have survived her address to the Evening Star re-unite village life more expressively than even Byron in his stanza of eight. It is the same with her couplet on the love-sick girl's despair over her faithless lover and the eight lines of Landor's. Where, as in "Altars to Artemis," "Feriam sidera vertice?" "Friends of Man," the fragments have been less informing, they still are fruitfully suggestive. In others again, as "Testimonies," and "A Dying Minstrel," who could resist the compelling of such texts to discourse upon them?

Obviously, I expect always to be on my defence, as for answers to "They had been Friends," "Music's Mastery," "My Harp," "Anger," "Whence?" "Bitter-Sweet," "Niobe and Latona," "Will and Hand," "The Nightingale," "Muses and Graces," "A Philosophy of Clothes," "At the Bough-end," "Looks and Acts," "Know Thyself," "Neither Honey nor Sting." If, though only here and there I may hope to have come near to reading the singer's purpose, very often I have been totally without a clue! And several are among the chief to provoke curiosity. Of what sort were the tears so

hard to dry, yet which travelled not along with the weeper? Silence, too, when Sappho was about to give us her day-dream of life as she would have it! To have joined in a concert with Procne, the songster of Spring, and for envious silence to descend! Yet again, when she has revealed her longings, for us to be baulked! Swinburne, in one of his poet-prophet's visions laid it down that Sappho, if only the modern world knew, was the greatest of Bards! Beautiful as are the complete extant poems, they are too few to justify so lofty a conclusion. Probably he had been pondering enigmas of the Fragments, and thence pronounced.

I print first the only complete poems which are known to have survived. The number is pitiful for a career which apparently never lost inspiration in a life of some fifty years.

TO HERA THE QUEEN

Freely I pray, nor need, great Hera, Mistress mine,
To be admonished, as Kings of the Argive line.
When by thy aid they had accomplished their design,
And proud Troy in the dust had laid.

Trusting in their own might, they shipped, and, pray'rless would
Have sailed, but, windbound, moored within Scamander's flood;
Till one night beside Agamemnon, humbled, stood
A Dream in thy fair form arrayed.

"Zeus," this said, "and I, with Semele's joyous Son,
Accepted thy vows, and thou hast Ilium won.
Now again ask, if thou need help; or We give none.
Find thy own way homewards to Greece."

Nor would thy grace, through which long since, no bard of arms,
I earned, they say, some honour by a strain that warms
Hearts of heroes against the chill of death, and charms
Hosts with visions of hearths and peace.

It flowed-on, inspiring lays on Woman, how she
Is beautiful, and how pure, and all sweet should be,
Making of my Isle a pattern whence Man may see
She's not less fair for being strong;

Had not I kept the Gods' kindness against all foes.
And looked thither for comfort in manifold woes.
By counting it a prize we aye must win or lose.
And, for Me, my one fount of song!

So, we offer up constant vows; our maids commerce
In thy name, Queen Hera, with Heaven, and rehearse
Thy praises on all festivals in dance and verse.
While newly I too voice thy will.

O may'st Thou guide—as erst a King—a Minstrel, kind
Goddess, on my far voyage, safe from wave and wind—
At least as perilous as any Sea—of Mind,
Until I shall my course fulfil!

TO APHRODITÉ

Queen Aphrodité on thy damasked throne,
Child of Zeus, with powers great as His own—
Though thine weave wiles, and thunders stamp His
frown—
Be merciful as thou art strong!

Thou canst bruise, break, hast racks at thy command;
I have felt the weight of thy rosy hand;
No fetters shackle as thy silken band.
Witness I, who have suffered long.

Yet, thou canst feel pity, as too I know.
Well I remember how, an age ago
Thy ready ears caught my cry of woe;
Thou didst thy Sire's gold Palace leave,

And, yoking thy fast sparrows in their car,
Wert whirled by the thick-feathered birds afar
From Heav'n through the midst of the Upper Air,
To me, where I'd sat down to grieve.

Scarcely had the appeal passed from my lips,
When, hark to hovering plumage, a whip's
Rustling caress, a touch of finger tips
Tilting upwards a downcast face,

And, blissful Immortal, the wicked smile! -
"What fresh hurt, Silly, calls me to thy Isle?
Whom art most made now for me to beguile?
Who the last Love? Whom dost thou chase?

"Tell, or not;—whos'ever the heart may be,
Henceforth not thou it, but it pursues thee;
Thou, tribute-payer, shalt hold it in fee;
Though scorning to adore, it must!"

Once more, come Goddess! loose me from my pain;
Shift on a tyrant soul the cruel chain;
Oh, let me use the freedom I regain
To help Thee grind that in the dust!

TO ANACTORIA, AT MITYLENE

Joy; a letter!—
No wonder our Isle's gay;
That hearts flutter to and fro, day by day.
Rapture; a whole Phalanx of spears!
A Fleet! Affection—why not?—veers.

Unstablest passion, resolved but to move;
Prompt to adventure, anywhere, is Love.
In Woman filaments aye watch
For fresh footholds where they may catch.

'Tis natural in Her to hold for dear
The alien from far, cheapen the near;
To take for granted worth home-grown;
When an exotic, to bow down.

Helen, with free choice of Greek manly charms,
Wooed by a whole chivalry to its arms,
Yet, false to her own plighted word,
Deserted parents, daughter, lord,

As if the Queen of Sparta, beckoned, must
Serve Troy's Curse, who trod honour in the dust.
Here, a great home—but squeezed dry this.
There, shadows all, of untried bliss!

So, Anactoria, you guessed not I
Would read, re-read, your letter to descry
One dear name, in vain, when you may
Meet, talk with, herself day by day.

Flash of swords? dull beside the twinkling feet,
Bright eyes and eyes I yearn for of my Sweet!
Seas part us. Write to Her? I fear;
For—if I be no longer dear?

Oh, say! is some of her love still mine? All—
Unhoped. If, though at secondhand, crumbs fall
Through your sympathy, I shall bless
You both. Aught but forgetfulness!

A BASHFUL LOVER

In her own bower, face to face, so near
Words must have been meant just for one to hear;
And the low voice liquidly sweet and clear;
  With the laugh that in silence leaves

A late lingering longing in the breast—
Does mortal life allow a lot more blest?
Could ev'n a God's be better than this best?
  Unconscious charm; nought that deceives!

By her, always—a dream! when I! one word;
And my heart flutters, as in a maimed bird;
Voiceless, tongue-stricken, with a fever stirred,
  Leaping here, there, the skin beneath;

Fixed eyes, unseeing; deaf ears ringing sound;
Perspired amazement that bedews the ground;
A starting tremor quavering around;
  Grass-green pallor scarce short of death.

Poor clay I, here, to claim a Goddess there!
But "your courage, Man, in both hands; and Dare!"
Not She scorns; and—Ah her pity —will care
  Not to wound, yet She must deny!

Alone, in twilight; musing, upon whom?
May She not lift her eyes! I'd read my doom!
She comes to meet me in the welcome gloom.
  And I here! How dare tell Her why!

RICH BUT ILLITERATE, AND A WOMAN

Frags., 68.

When thy time comes, thou shalt lie, with no remembrance of thee
Then, or after; for thou hast no share in the roses of Pieria.
Thy doom is to stray up and down beside the homes of Hades,
Belonging to none, flickering among the indistinguishable dead.

You are no rose of the Muses; nor will They from your breath
Distil balm enough to sweeten your memory in death.
Die you must for once and all; since this Earth's goods will be gone,
And nought can be recollected of deeds that you have done.
Along the streets of Hades you, shadowless Shade, will stray,
Flitting among Ghosts as indistinguishable as they.

THE EVENING STAR

Frags., 95.

Evening Star! Thou that bringest whatsoever
Light-giving Dawn scattered; Thou
Bringest the sheep, the goat; back
Thou bringest to its Mother the Child.

WHAT'ER Morn's beams scattered, each to Day's care,
Hesperus, Thine, soft comforter, to bear
Flocks to fold, field-worn Mother home to Babe,
Twin yearnings on one breast, to nestle there!

TO A BROTHER POET

Frags., 32 *and* 136.

Alcæus : "*Twining violets into a wreath, pure, soft-smiling*
Sappho,
I would speak, but shame hinders."

Sappho : "*Hadst thou craved things good and fair,*
And not concocted some evil thing,
Shame had not come to thy eyes.
Straightforwardly wouldst thou have declared thy
wish."

"Alcæus to confess his heart could frame
A wish that tongue and eyes refused in shame
To avow, and cloud Sappho's smiling face,
Pure as violets she twined, at his disgrace!
Poet with Poet! We to have our lot
Sacrificed to cravings tongue, eyes, dare not
Interpret, but for very shame are dumb!
We decreed audible beyond the tomb.

"Men wish the dying, harassed with affairs,
Final deliverance from human cares.
While they hold him dearest, and fondly weep,
They would lap him in an eternal sleep.

"Us too, brother Minstrel, awaits repose
In the Muses' sweet-smelling grove we chose;
Yet not 'earth to earth' We! Spirits we wing
Our flight into Blue Air. There we shall sing
To souls that understand, and still rehearse
In far ages our Æolian verse;
Turning tatters—they for blear eyes may be—
To gold-purple sunsets for those that see!"

MOON AND STARS

Frags., 3.

The stars encircling the lovely moon suddenly veil their shining beauty, when in the height of her full beams, she floods the whole heaven with her silver lustre.

Though ye outshine the Moon scarce yet your peer,
Presume not, Stars. When darkens eve to night,
Queen, She, at full, of you, and of the Sphere,
Floods Earth with silver light!

LOVE-LORN

Frags., 90.

Sweet Mother! I cannot strike the web,
Broken as I am by yearning after a boy,
At Aphrodité's caprice.

Mother, dear Mother, sweet Mother—"Ply my loom?"
Ah that I could!
Remember you not me a blithe girl at home?
Ere I was wooed?
Aphrodité flung for sport this heart a slave
To love that racks
A sobbing, dying taper into its grave,
Mere guttered wax!

"DESIRES"

Frags., 13, 15.

Whatever men long for, I—
But of this I am conscious myself.

"Whatever Human Beings long for"—so my theme began—
Presuming a desire could be found in every man;
But to my surprise I found that a multitude on Earth
Have had no wish for aught beyond their present lot since birth.
Desires are numberless, and it might have been deemed for each
Would a hand stretch to pick out one that it thought well to reach.
So, I would fain suppose that the Many contemplate, and take
Warning from the shipwrecks that the victims of desires make.
Fools! as if without aspirings, the world would not have stood
Still, and misuse were not inherent in all that is good.
They are Nature's motive forces; without them it were vain
To bar return of Sleep and Chaos to resume their reign.
I have fancied that Music chose my soul for dwelling-place,

And in the hope have guarded it against use mean or base!
Am persuaded even to breathe and sing for me are one;
That we are bound together till my hold on Earth be gone.
For my happiness, by Heaven's grace, never have I known
Civil war between Desire and the Self I call my own.

WILL AND HAND

Frags., 38.

I (have no free will, but) flutter, a young bird, after her mother.

You ask: "Why I sing not of Kings and Wars,
Heroes fighting their way among the Stars;
Why rescue not great deeds from Time's neglect,
And burst dull Oblivion's bolts and bars."

Think you I choose my course? No, not so much
As nestling, that the parent with a clutch
Of beak, or wing, forward, side-ways or back,
Shifts to and fro, as barque the helmsman's touch.

I murmur not; nor that my themes are blown
On the breath of music like thistledown.
Melody may waft home a mighty thought;
Love lyrics outlive pæans of a Crown.

And the joy in still watches of the night!
Lo! dancing through the brain a sudden flight
Of fairy-Spirits that thrill throat and harp
Into ecstasies of amazed delight!

Visit me, Phantoms, oftener; the air
Is sweet with garlands dropped by such guests there.
It is my pride when of my verse they say:
"Flowers thrown down, and picked up anywhere!"

THE CUNNING OF LOVE

Frags., 40.

Love loosens my limbs, racks me;
Bitter-sweet, unmanageable sly snake!

Who, what, am I? O that a mere hand-shake,
The glance of two bright eyes, a blush, should make
My limbs, soul, relax, a new Spirit creep,
Curl, through my entire being, like a snake!

And then, straight, in the very citadel,
Lo! a stranger, with clear design to dwell,
Though in what capacity it is there,
It is modestly disinclined to tell.

None less a tyrant. Seniors advise
To expel the self-invited guest. Wise
Conscience your own approves. You report advice,
And read refusal in resolved moist eyes.

What writ of ejectment to bring to bear
On defendant with, for arms, a tear,
A smile, and in the last resort a kiss,
With assent to go if not wanted there!"

Two-sided? may be; and war to the knife.
Has not love its worth? 'tis a fight for life.
Nature may will it; as the victor knows,
May grieve she, he, is cruel in the strife.

But no less the "sweetness!" a new life born
As from death; from old faculties outworn
Unimaginable germs, flowers, fruits.
Ah! Earth without love were a world forlorn!

MY HARP

Some, I affirm, will recollect us even hereafter!

My Harp stands not on its dignity; takes the humblest theme,
Hoping that ev'n it may yield a precious, ennobling gleam.
Song, racy of the strong native soil out of which it grows,
Sets upon its brow a star, on its bosom a wild rose.
From gay it can turn to grave, of the change scarce witting; why
Contraries touch the lyre, while it keeps perfect harmony.
I have harped, sung, for many years, in many moods; each one
Be taken for a milestone, to count how my life has run.
Do thy worst, O Time, in demolition of Earthly things,
Even erase in libraries the lays of Her that sings;
Leaves, nor sere, may flutter along, and spirit-harpings tell
Of a soul of music that will not have yet lost its spell!

"FERIAM SIDERA VERTICE?"

Frags., 37.

"*I claim not to touch Heaven with my two arms.*"

None I to storm Heaven with my two arms.
Mortal could not dwell with Immortal there,
Sight would fade in blaze of Celestial charms,
Lungs fail to breathe in that rare atmosphere.
I lie in Nature's lap, clasp, and adore,
Grateful for beauty of this Earth of ours—
Wonder at each day's new births more and more
A carpet was worked, every dawn, of flow'rs,
Yet am I in close converse with the Skies.
Some of their People deign to hold me dear,
And at my call to unfold mysteries,
Will God, or Goddess, suddenly appear.
Hence the slender clue lost in some by-lane
In youth's apprenticeship to a fine art,
And Heaven had led where Earth's strength is vain,
Through the winding labyrinth of the heart.

MINSTREL OF LOVE

Frags., 79.

I care for daintiness ; and Love for his lot with me has drawn
The radiance of the Sun, and the Beautiful.

All know my arbour in the Muses' grove ;
I bower there with the minstrelsy of love.
Heaven was kind ; the lot when it was thrown
Happened to fit in temper with my own.
I incline to choose the delicate, soft,
Woo sweetness, yet be free to range aloft,
Ev'n burn. So, the Queen whose colours I wear,
Inspiring honour, grace, Celestial air,
Will at times impel a high course to run,
Dazzling my brain with gazing on the Sun.

MUSES AND GRACES

Frags., 60, 65.

Hither Muses of the beautiful locks!
Gentle rosy-armed Graces, hither to Me, though daughters of Zeus;
Ye, of arms, like roses, tender, and pure!

Two Divine Choirs claim the Minstrel; aloft
The Muses call; Graces too, pure and soft.
Offspring of Zeus each troop, I need you both,
And have plighted to each of you my troth.
Golden-haired Nine, having drunk at your well,
I mount the Eagle sent from where Ye dwell;
The rapture! but how brief! I wake forlorn,
And disenchanted, in the chill, grey morn—
  Ev'n to falling headlong, had not six arms—
Each a rose—lent the aid of their young charms
To help me downwards; for, mere mortal I,
Nought Immortal, pine in a changeless sky,
And complexions—mixed dawn—sunshine—and—dew—
Fade from excess of ethereal Blue,
Requiring long intervals upon Earth
To renew there the fresh air of your birth.
  Zeus be thanked for Graces, who love to share
Squalid lodgings with Bards, and humble fare.
They smooth rough ways of rough men for our feet;
Coax from the waste flowerets wild and sweet.
A touch of theirs; peace is where discord was;
One breath, spirit forthwith informs a mass.
  Muses, scourge on; I glory in my lot;
If Graces joy in serving, blame Me not!

UNCONSCIOUS CHARM

Frags., 35, 49, 46.

Least of all to exalt thyself on the score of a ring!
Or of a haughty Palace!
Better if a maid, with a wreath of soft flowers round a slender throat.

Requirest, Court Lady, my Harp to sing
That whereon thou pridest thyself—a Ring?
Go, seek thy minstrel in the womb of Earth
That conceived, bore, and wore the precious thing.

Or claimest song as of thy own wit born
Inside a King's chamber, not hut forlorn;
Though, were the choice thine, wise it might have been
To prefer poverty, and even scorn.

But, sweet maid, for my Harp enough that thou
Floatest up and down, bird upon a bough;
No craving within thee to be admired;
Not a smile but lets the whole soul shine through.

See! clasping soft neck with as soft caress,
Wreath blest if knowing its own happiness.
Innocent girlhood, spring flowers, pure scents.
Gentler, Harp! or joy will be in excess!

WHENCE ?

Frags., 45.

Become, Divine Shell, now a voice for me!

Friends listen as my fingers touch the strings.
They applaud the hand, and the throat that sings.
Harp, pardon that I reap praise undeserved,
And walking on earth, seem to soar on wings.

Humbly I wait on Thee; and I am proud
To be thy faithful vassal; be allowed
First to taste of the nectar that distils
Into thy cup from Hippocrené's flood.

Rather would I be thy handmaid, a slave
To voice thy music, than a Queen, and have
A surf of hoarse flatteries at my feet,
Hollow and barren as the salt sea wave.

Thou liest on my breast, seemest to sleep,
When I feel a quiver begin to creep
Over me, and my fingers moved to dance
On the chords, and the melody to leap.

The mystery of the birth!—who can tell?
Where conceivedst the Wonder—in what cell?
And the glory, the rapture, to Thyself!
The bliss to me, thy minister, O Shell!

CHAMPION ATHLETE, AND HARPIST

Frags., 71.

"*I trained* '*Hero*' *the Champion Runner.*"

GREAT is Song. An old tale; but all remember
"Hero's" fame;
"Hero" of Gyaros; Hellas cannot forget his name.
The lovely, gallant youth, a paragon in women's eyes,
Trained in Lesbos for Delphi. My harp foretold his
the prize.
As he left us, I, of the young that saw him on his way
To the Games, reminded him he had promised me the
bay:
"The first stage on the road a Hero has always trod
In the ascent by deeds to Heaven, to be Star and
God!"
So he went, and my heart with him!
Lo! nineteen of renown,
Grown men, and he, a mere stripling, competed for the
crown.
A wild uproar! Although, when three-fourths of the
race were done,
He and one more, in felt silence, ran, neck by neck,
alone.
Alas! the younger's right foot! a flint pierced deep!
sore it bled.
Thence, every pace of his was printed in trickling red.
The other sped by.

But hark! a harp's note! and, like a blast,
"Hero," on music's wings, had caught up his rival, and passed.
Blind he embraced the goal; stammered a pray'r to send the wreath
To "'Sappho' of Mitylene, the Victress!"
And then, Death!
As on a starry night I gaze where Mitylene's Hall
Blazons the tale, and among old memories I recall
The lyrist's, seer's rapture that inspired to win the crown,
I wonder whether perhaps the boy may be looking down.
Many less fine acts have raised, 'tis told, to the stars than this;
And trainers have showed less aptly than bards the path to bliss!

A PHILOSOPHY OF CLOTHES

Frags., 70.

What rustic beauty charms thy soul
Who knows not how even rags
May flow about the ankles!

Oh! the phantasies that move
All in manly shape to love;
And oh! the traps, the decoys
In his chase the God employs!
All's fish comes to hook or net;
His appetite's aye sharp set.
No close season's kept by him,
Clean run, foul, whatever swim.
Fair game though not flying; kill
Bird on bush, with like good will.
But some faults he pardons not;
Lo! most heinous of the lot.
Say "Woman"; and not suppose
Therewith "neat at ankles" goes?
After brute-force, stick or whip
Love-making, first, lip to lip,
Came when women grew clothes. Then,
Heart, heart, the Sex courted men.
Power—is it instinct? Art?
Breathes from woman's dress, each part.
Tie, stray fold, is eloquent

In wench, dame of high descent.
What avails the shepherdess
A form's exquisiteness,
Wooing a king to her arms,
When, lest it belie her charms,
Awkwardly she seeks to hide
Clouts might "point" her beauty's pride.
Hark! damsels who would be loved,
And know how passion is moved
By perfect limbs, and the grace
Of voice, blush, and winsome face;
Forget not dress speaks as well;
May, aid it not love, dispel.
I have sung the God, and will;
Now learn how his fires to chill!

"THEY HAD BEEN FRIENDS!"

Frags., 33, 34, 41.

A puny awkward child, such thou seemed'st to me;
Yet, Atthis, once upon a time I loved thee,
'twas long since.
And now to thee, flitting elsewhere, thought
of me is hateful!

Our ancient love! And now? All gone!
Shreds of remembered fondness? None.
Hate, abhorrence, scorn.
Not one stray
Sigh to tell a Ghost passed this way!

CUPID'S PARENTAGE

Frags., 74.

Thou, and my Page, Love.

None can tell Cupid's birth—of whom the Child.
"At least Aphrodité's Son?" Shame! hast seen
Aught of a likeness in that urchin wild
To the sweet, gracious lady, Beauty's Queen!

She hunt, and cheat, and trap—to hang her waist
With bleeding hearts! Nay! I can prove She will
Fly down from the Heavens in breathless haste
To ease a sick breast of a passing ill.

Careless of broken vows; of souls that pine?
She who weeps Adonis for countless years;
And neglects not in Palaces Divine
Toll to a mortal of Immortal tears.

Like Earth's Kings, my Queen moves above the shade—
Too high the Goddess in radiant charms—
That veil frolics her freakish Page has played
In the tender glow of her shield and arms!

Cupid borrows her name; 'twould be as right
To charge his pranks to her as to King Sun
Wrongs that without the presence of day's light
In Nature's forces, could not have been done.

A PAIR

Frags., 107, 105, 106, 103.

Cry Hymenæus! Alas for Adonis!
Hail, Bride! Hail, honoured Bridegroom, Hail! All Hail!
For there lives no other girl, Bridegroom, such as she!
A rejoicing Bride! Thereat, Bridegroom, rejoice!

Bear witness, Hymenæus, whom thy Queen is sending down—
In memory of her Adonis—with a bridal crown,
That never sealed She a marriage with higher hopes than this;
One that gives full promise from youth to age of equal bliss.
It is as if the Powers that pair Destinies had set
Their wits and self-love to compact two natures wherein met
Parcels of noblest qualities, both required to enrich
One home, without rivalry, each adorning its own niche.
See! courage and honour here, perfection of manly grace;
Ask not what blood flows in his veins; behold it in his face.
Then, toil not to seek the Bride that would such a man beseem.
Here, among ourselves a maiden lovely as in a dream!
Play, flutes, and lyres; blow, bugles; triumphing upon each side!
Joy, Bridegroom, in her joy! take to thy arms a willing Bride!

AT THE BOUGH-END

Frags., 83.

As the sweet-apple reddens at the end of the bough,
At the extreme end; and they who gathered forgot;
Nay, not so, but could not reach.

If the sweet-apple, fairest of the crop,
Rosiest the sun has kissed, does not drop
In the gardener's basket from the bough,
Wonderest thou?

Lo! the sweetest Maid, who, in beauty bright,
Has held triumphantly her virgin height.
Art surprised She has kept till now her charms
Against all arms?

More I at her surrender. In all grace
Transcendent; heiress of wealth and old race;
Heart so kind each suitor she had to send
Away, stayed friend.

Only, I know her winner; and, for Man,
He parallels Her, so far as man can,
With less self-distrust than woman will have,
Sweetest born-slave!

FRIENDS OF MAN

Frags., 51.

And when the ambrosia had been mixed in the bowl,
Hermes took the ladle to serve the Gods therefrom.
All held forth their cups. They made libations,
And wished wholly good things to the Bridegroom.

The Blessed Gods are always near to us in weal and woe;
Confer, Kings, with Earth's Kings; share lowly cabins with the low.
Call on Them for justice with a pure and reverent heart;
Straight, thy undoer's self, or home, feels Heav'n's righteous dart!
They mourn among the mourners and with revellers are gay;
And as mortals have to vie for a maid's love, so have They.
It is joy to them that men rely on Them in their need;
When the want is instant, that instant they have taken heed.
Wonder ye "why They exist—these People of Upper Air?"
To give us cause for praying, is the answer I will dare.
Their ears are always open; their wings of themselves unfold
As libations fall, as a lamb in ribbons quits the fold.

Think ye that Celestial Spirits hunger and thirst like man?
No; to be prayed to comfort, to the uttermost They can!
But—so mean the creature—knowing how venal he himself,
He credits Heaven with like appetite for meat and pelf.
Thus Gods disregard our victims; are apt to shun a Shrine;
And there, least of all, we meet a Presence that is Divine.
Look not for such in places where in sacrificial pomp
Processions march up and down to the roar of drum and trump.
Rarely Deity attends hymeneals of the Great;
To uninitiated eyes scarce could It swell the State.
Yet when a Minstrel weds Beauty, as Thou Thee, each my Friend,
All the High Gods from Olympus, to bless the Two, descend.
Beside the modest hall, wherein the marriage feast is spread,
My Spirit, as I chant, beholds another banquet laid.
A bright band—no Shadows these—of glorious Beings pass,
And a flower sheds incense from every blade of grass.
By an ample bowl Hermes, deftest of cupbearers, stands,
Crowning the Gods' goblets from the full flagon in his hands.
But, as in succession they pour libations to the Fates,
Aged, blind Spinsters, that rule Immortals, as kings rule States,

The Harp begins to leave my fingers, the tall Forms to rise—
With all blessings on the Pair—to their home above the Skies,
To unearthly music; though, while They fade into the Blue,
A long, luminous track still gilds Their steps to human view!

THE NIGHTINGALE

Frags., 39.

Spring's herald, the Nightingale,
With its note of yearning.

Shake off lethargy, dull year!
Nature, awake; Spring will anon be here.
Hark to its harbinger; hail,
Strain Divine—Silence for sweet Nightingale!

"Strange partnership! gay young Spring,
Why not the Linnet for its heralding?
There had been no call to hush
Midnight discords for him in grove and bush.

Sunshine's choir, let that rejoice
With one accord of flitting plumes and voice,
As day paints the purple bloom
Of the hyacinth, gilds the gorse and broom.

Would not merry notes and bright,
Wings that play and gleam in the morning light,
Prelude better the year's masque,
A new God's first draught from a nectar flask?"

No! Spring, keep, through the brown bird
Nature, nor sleeping, nor awakened, stirred
In a delicious unrest
By melodies stored in an old world's breast.

While at warm midnight I lie,
Tranced, eyes open, beneath a starlit sky,
And hear on the arbutus
Earliest songsters that have crossed to us.

They converse, warbling, and tell
Of all that was, shall be, to Time's last knell,
Till I doubt if the whole be
Of my dreaming, or hymning from the tree!

Nightingales, no heed ye pay
Me, as ye conjure, each on slender spray;
But Music is ceaseless force;
It moves souls, with no such thought, in its course;

And I thrilled through by your song,
Floating on liquid harmony along,
Re-live desire, hopes, and fears,
Heart's yearnings unfulfilled of bygone years.

PROCNE AND PHILOMEL

Frags., 88.

What with me, Pandion's daughter, charming Swallow?

Pandion's daughter, sweet, Spring Swallow, why
Hauntest thou me, flitting ever by?
I welcomed the skirmishings that drove forth
Winter, flights of shafts feathered with blue sky;

Rejoiced at thy glad advent from old Nile
To nest about the dwellings of my Isle.
Well I deemed it that Itys is forgot;
That a tear is transient as a smile!

Now be Content! The Sun sets; on the air,
Hark! a dirge rolling time back far and far;
Pain not to be soothed; an appeal; a sob;
Wrung from an illimitable despair;—

Vengeance cried on the incestuous bed,
A Son's blood by Mother, Wife, Sister shed,
Rising into a flood, deep, final, full;
Then felt stillness—as to raise guilty dead!

Again, the music—passion at high tide;
With listening night, with stars as they ride
In their heaven.
Plead, wondrous Pleader, plead!
Plead, Thou, as Thou wilt, I am on thy side!

TRUE LOVE

Frags., 21, 22.

As for me, thou hast drunk of Lethe;
Or lovest some other of men more than me.

You write: "I've forgotten." Canst not forget—
Didst never know. Love is a plant that set
In soil fit to receive it, requires Death
To uproot it; the Spirit that lives yet.

"I love one more," you add. No "more, or most,"
Love allows. Ah! me, have to drag a Ghost—
Rotting, though Shadow through Eternity
Love I ne'er won, or could not have lost!

DESOLATION

Frags., 17.

Fled—with a vow of remorse in proportion to the dropping of my tears.

Self-banished; for penance he vows "he shall be hurled
With no rest for his feet, wandering round the world!"

"I pine alone! Dreams he that for him to depart
Heals treason, is the way to mend my broken heart!"

NIOBE AND LATONA

Frags., 31.

Latona and Niobe had been bosom friends.

Who is this Queen, seated high in front of her Palace Gate,
Crowned, purple-robed, and in all trappings of Royal estate,
With warriors to guard her, King Amphion at their head?
Who these boys and maidens, unwounded, yet stark, staring dead?
Six sons, five daughters, stone-dead; and a child a Mother's arm
Clasps fast to her breast in cold Death, with kisses to keep warm;
Yet feels not, understands not the ruin of hope and pride,
The mockery of pomp around, the shambles by her side.
A blind gaze is fixed on Kithæron's dark cliffs frowning near,
Where two Archers unbend their bows ere they wing to a far sphere.
Neither of them, nor of a Form between seems She to know—
Trance of agony—that there is the source of all her woe!

For She is on a slope of Mount Sipylus. Two girls there,
In rustic garb, are dressing with flowers each other's hair
Tenderly, and fain would they forget as they intertwine
Garlands, that one is of King's blood, the other of Divine.
Only might they, free of Olympus, and an Earthly Throne,
Tend silly sheep, by Princes and Goddesses let alone!
Maidens ye forebode not women's hearts give jealousies birth
That fit each murderous instinct, in Heaven, or on Earth!

"MAKING ENEMIES"

Frags., 12.

"*For they whose benefactor I am*
Do me most harm."

A KING lay dying, after a reign, sunshine half, half shade,
And brain moralized on foes of whom Court had plotters made:
"Strange my worst ills have been worked by the low I favoured most!"
Hermes, in waiting to escort Below a Royal Ghost,
Rebuked the unspok'n plaint: "Boxed Fortune's compass in the past,
And now be wounded by ingratitude at this late last!
Birth breeds instincts, standard of rewards for its King's defence;
Creatures of bounty have but their own scales of recompense.
Thou should'st have asked minions their price, when venturing to lift
Beggars from the mire, have required a receipt for each gift!"

"KNOW THYSELF"

Frags., 111.

"*To himself he appears.*"

"Appears to Himself"—And, pray, who is this
So bold as thinks he sees what himself is?
Declare you have "climbed Heaven, talked with Jove";
No human rival can your word disprove.
You are safe, soaring above mortal ken,
Your own too; out of sight of other men.
Quote rational "self-knowledge," the whole Town
With one consent unites to shout you down.
Bear up; and sometime, after you are dead,
Ev'n Sons will allow: "So old Father said";
Or—nobler triumph—you survive to grant:
"Fool that I was to make the empty vaunt!"

A WILD FLOWER

Frags., 94.

As on the mountains shepherds tread underfoot
A hyacinth, and the blossom spreads the empurpled sod.

A WILD hyacinth, in torn purple. Perfect fruit
Of labouring ages. Crushed by a churl's rough foot.
One weeps:
"Singest thou of my innocent flower?
Glory of the home she made a royal bower.
Alas! when ripe to be transplanted, bloom elsewhere,
Queen in a fresh garden, command as loving care—
A robber stole within, witched my darling away,
The morrow, flung in the mire—sated in a day!"

ANGER

Frags., 27, 28.

When anger is rambling about thy breast, set a guard over a random-barking tongue!

I.

Wrath? But bluster? This brawling up and down
A breast? A pack of curs that wake a town?
Why at the least not muzzle tongue and lips,
If headstrong tempers be too stiff to drown?

Anger, noble and righteous, dares bide
In calm bosoms. Gates in due course swing wide;
No new Bedlamite issues, but a Judge,
To doom, if crime there be, and have been tried.

II.

But Souls with fiery particles strewed—
How preach to them to keep a tranquil mood!
As well bid dwellers on a river's bank
Sleep to the moaning, with the stream in flood.

For your own, as others' sakes, bear in mind
To store in brain and heart a stock of kind
Thoughts and feelings—for they are eloquent—
That shall not—will not—leave a sting behind!

"NEITHER HONEY; NOR BEE"

Frags., 113, 115.

For me neither honey, nor sting.
Thou roastest us.

A wise Maid's vow to Love.
And Aphrodité's Dove
Brings pledge to grant it: "Bride—
Hallowed and purified
By mutual, vowed truth—
As from the Gates of Youth
Thou pacest, take calm bliss,
Sweet, and in no excess;
With, in a chaste, brave home, to follow, in due course, after,
Echoes, round thy woods and fields, of happy children's laughter."

"THOU BURNEST US"

And Thou, the hunger-eyed.
Hast been in battle tried?
Surely Thou drawest breath
After wrestling with death?
"With Love."
Thou sayest, "Love"?
But He's soft as a dove!
"Fondle Him on thy breast,
And hope no more for rest!
He will sear thee, brand thee for his slave, scourge thee to the brink
Of a red-hot, brimstone lake, plunge thee in, and bid thee drink!"

SUMMER DREAMS

Frags., 4.

And around there is a rush
Through the apple boughs of cool;
And slumber flows down the quivering leaves.

Come, happy dreams!
May the cooling breeze,
Rustling in apple trees,
People with you sleep that streams
On tired eyes in this afternoon
Of a murmurous, blossomy June!

ALTARS TO ARTEMIS

Frags., 53, 54.

The Moon rose; She shone at her full;
And the women of Crete at such times now worshipped.
Skimming with delicate feet the feathery flower
Of the grass they danced tunefully about the orb,
As a lovely altar.

On many a green spot, at the fall of a summer eve,
Cretan maidens have been wont to frequent some fair
Altar of Artemis, in the fond hope that, as they weave
The meshes of the dance, She may to them repair;

For tradition tells that in the past, as delicate feet
Stirred the tender bloom of the grass—a soft caress—
With the Moon at full—while still the hymn's rhythmic time they beat,
Herself would from the forest join in archer's dress.

Now too? Is not the Orb Hers? The Sire's gift—Night's brightest gem;
And she trusts it by itself, when She hunts a grove,
Why not, if maids She cherishes pray Her to come to them,
Steal an hour for their dear sakes from Her realm above?

IMAGE AND REFLECTION

Frags., 101.

He who is handsome is reckoned good;
And he that actually is good, will come
To be reckoned handsome too.

Beauty, Nature's kind gift, induces love,
And disposes morally to approve.
The good may not have been born fair; but grace
Will somehow light up thereby a good man's face.

HER OWN FAREWELL

Frags., 591.

" I say not that death is a good thing. Else, the Gods would have
Chosen it; and They did not. But it is not lawful to chant dirges in homes
Where they who frequent the Muses shall have dwelt.
Those rites befit not us."

Mr. H. T. Wharton in his " Sappho " quotes from Maximus Tyrius—" Dissertations "—high approval by Socrates of rebukes by Sappho of her daughter for regarding a poet's death as a calamity.

To be lamented dead—and Minstrel I!
Wailing, that I who served the Muses die!
Not regret to have lost one gift of mine!
No vision of my Immortality!

I, the Songtress, live—and, though if to sing
I know not, or whither my way I wing,
Count, being that I am, on work to call
For no wringing of hands, and pitying.

Death is an end on Earth of Man's career;
He parts, none can tell for what uses " There."
The powers Heaven gave I hope It deems
Have not flickered away into waste air.

Though men cannot be required to hail death
If good, Gods would vie to draw their last breath
It is mean to shudder from its approach,
When kindly Nature beckons us Beneath

Shame on her children! Most, on Bards of all
Whom She has favoured, and plans now to call
To fresh spheres, to murmur! "No!" joy; reply
Leaders in Thought, and in the Judgment-Hall!

TESTIMONIES

Frags., 125, 127, 129, 146.

Weaver of fancies. That is, inspiring a quickening brightness everywhere; in accord with maidens' bright eyes, honeyed-voices, and the roses they resemble.

Socrates, "wisest Greek," styled, we are told,
Sweet Sappho "Weaver of Myths"; that is, old
Fancies, tales, with a purpose somehow wrought
Into them by the mechanism of thought.
Thrilled by her harp, gossamers caught a new
Meaning, higher, larger, for mind to view.
Gods, ev'n Aphrodite, kinder became;
Life found proposed to it a nobler aim.
On Minstrels, Women, she imposed a creed,
For the world's sake their province was to lead.
From her smiling Isle, by no tyrant force,
A lyric flood swept Hellas in its course.
Nature learned on her sovereign harp to tell
True magic; Art to "manifold" the spell
Her joy in sun-rise! how Hesperus glows!
The rapture at a girl's wreath! at a rose!
For Solon, Socrates, when death was near,
Comforter She, disarming it of fear!
Yes; She lives; no mere name; and now and then
Happy accidents let Her speak to men,
Tell them what store of sweetness froz'n! how great
Their loss! price the salvage, and estimate.

Price the "life" in each particle the wave
Of lava, petrified in time to save,
Or spade, rescued from its Egyptian tomb!
Whose else the verses to outlast such doom?
From what dead lips but hers could thought so sing,
Soar, and carol, a bird upon the wing?

THE END.

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS
LONDON AND WOKING